Los Angeles Times

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'We don't even see any businesspeople anymore. We don't see anybody going to Universal.'

— Metro train operator

Photographs by Wally Skalij Los Angeles Times

MATTHEW MORALES smokes fentanyl in the Metro subway leaving MacArthur Park. From November to January, there were 26 medical emergencies reported at the station, many suspected overdoses.

PLENTY OF EMPTY SEATS ON THE TRAIN

Drug overdoses, crime drive riders away from Metro

By Rachel Uranga

A.J. JACKSON prepares to smoke fentanyl as Morales, right, bends forward. "We look out for each other," Jackson says.

Matthew Morales boarded the Metro Red Line at MacArthur Park as classical music blared over the station loudspeakers.

It was rush hour on a Tuesday afternoon, and Morales made his way to a back corner seat and unfolded a tiny piece of foil with several blue shards of fentanyl. As the train started west, he heated the aluminum with a lighter and sucked in the smoke through a pipe fashioned from a ballpoint pen.

Doors opened and closed. A few passengers filed in and out. A grain of the opioid fell to the floor. He concentrated on trying to pick it up, then lost track, as his body went limp. His shoulders slumped and he slowly keeled forward.

By the time the train arrived at the Wilshire/Western station, Morales, 29, was doubled over and nearly motionless, his hand on the floor. The train operator walked out of the cabin, barely glancing at him as she passed [See **Metro,** A9]

Resolve rises with the water in soggy town

Some residents of Pajaro, home to 3,000, find reasons to stay despite the flooding.

By Ruben Vives, Susanne Rust and Hayley Smith

PAJARO, Calif. — Dora Alvarez stood on the balcony of her two-story apartment building Tuesday, holding a garden hose next to a rain gutter and steering the water toward recycling bins below for her family to use after boiling it.

"As long as they don't shut the gas off, we'll be OK," she said.

Alvarez, 54, and her family were among the residents who chose not to evacuate Pajaro, the small migrant town that flooded when a levee on the Pajaro River failed late Friday, forcing hundreds of people to flee their homes.

"I know some people criticize us for not leaving, but the flooding danger isn't here, it's somewhere else," Alvarez said, pointing south toward Salinas Road, which was submerged in water.

Standing nearby, her neighbor Karla Loreto, 35, nodded in agreement.

"We're also not going to be wandering around in search of danger," Loreto said.

The town has in many ways become ground zero for the latest atmospheric river storm walloping California, the 11th of the season so far.

The storm has dropped even more rain and snow on the state and sent residents racing from rising waters. Dozens of flood watches and warnings were in effect late [See **Pajaro,** A7]

Atmospheric river storm No. 11

Latest California deluge causes more misery with flooding, evacuations and outages. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Wally Skalij Los Angeles Times

LOCAL POLICE drive a military vehicle along flooded Salinas Road in Pajaro on Tuesday.

President signs order to bolster firearm controls

During Monterey Park visit, Biden meets with families of mass shooting victims.

By Seema Mehta and Courtney Subramanian

President Biden on Tuesday signed an executive order to curb gun violence and enhance background checks on firearms buyers, spending part of the afternoon consoling a Monterey Park community devastated by a mass shooting on the eve of Lunar New Year in January.

"I'm here on behalf of the American people to mourn with you, to pray with you, to let you know you are loved and not alone," Biden told about 200 people in the gymnasium of a Boys & Girls Club. "I know what it's like to get that call.... I know what it's like to lose a loved one so suddenly. It's like losing a piece of your soul."

Biden's visit took place less than half a mile from a dance studio where 11 people were killed and nine wounded on the night of Jan. 21. The gunman moved on to another dance hall in Alhambra, where he was disarmed by Brandon Tsay.

Tsay, 26, who was Biden's guest at the State of the Union address before Congress in February, met the president at Los Angeles International Airport on Tuesday and received sustained applause when Biden praised him at the gathering.

"In an instant, he found the courage to act and wrestle a semiautomatic firearm out of the way," Biden said. "Brandon saved lives and protected the community."

Biden spoke for about 20 minutes before meeting privately with first responders and the victims' family members.

The president is on a three-day trip to California and Nevada. On Monday, he met with leaders of Australia and the United Kingdom in San Diego. On Wednesday, he is expected to discuss efforts to reduce the cost of prescription drugs in Las Vegas. He attended a fundraiser Monday evening in Rancho Santa Fe, where he raised $1 million for the Democratic National Com- [See **Firearms,** A6]

COVID deaths lead to charges

L.A. elder care facility where 13 residents and a nurse died is accused of ignoring risk.

By Nathan Solis

The operators of an upscale Los Angeles care facility for dementia patients were charged Tuesday with felony elder abuse and other criminal counts related to the deaths of an employee and thirteen residents during the early days of the pandemic.

Silverado Beverly Place, near the Fairfax district, specializes in caring for elderly residents with Alzheimer's and dementia, and was the site of a COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020.

The employee and residents died during the outbreak, in which 45 employees and 60 residents were infected, according to the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. The facility's operators were sued in civil court by the families of multiple residents and the employee who died. The facility was the subject of a 2020 Times investigation.

The facility was meant to be closed to visitors, prosecutors said, when it admit- [See **COVID,** A7]

Soudi Jimenez Hoy

GLORIA MOLINA was the first Latina elected to the California Assembly, the Los Angeles City Council and the county Board of Supervisors.

A Latina trailblazer who's inspiring, unapologetic

Gloria Molina's cancer disclosure is a gut punch

GUSTAVO ARELLANO

They always say to never meet your heroes, but there I was in a downtown Los Angeles office building in 2019, about to interview Gloria Molina.

When I was a kid, she was one of the few politicians I knew by name, and the only one who wasn't a white Republican man. My relatives in East Los Angeles spoke reverentially about her efforts as a state Assembly member in the 1980s to stop the construction of a prison there.

When Molina became the first Latina on the L.A. County Board of Supervisors in 1991, my mom proudly told me that she was a history maker we should root for, even though we lived in Anaheim.

In college, I found more reasons to respect Molina. Her days as a student activist in college, which turned into advocacy on behalf of Mexican women sterilized without their consent at Los Angeles [See **Arellano,** A12]

TERMINAL DIAGNOSIS: Gloria Molina says she has lived with cancer for three years but is fortunate to have had a "beautiful life." **CALIFORNIA, B1**

U.S. says drone was hit by Russia

Moscow denies one of its fighter jets struck the MQ-9's propeller in the encounter over the Black Sea. **WORLD, A3**

LAUSD strike threat looms

Labor leaders will declare details of walkout plan that would close schools. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Who's to blame in SVB collapse?

Rollback of Dodd-Frank was one of many factors in Silicon Valley Bank's woes. **BUSINESS, A8**

Weather

Showers early in the day. L.A. Basin: 62/50. **B6**

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VISIT…

PERSPECTIVES

SVB's red flags missed by Fed and others

MICHAEL HILTZIK

On Jan. 18, William C. Martin, a short-seller and former hedge fund executive, warned his Twitter followers that they were missing something important about Silicon Valley Bank.

SVB's shares had lost about 65% of their value over the previous 12 months. Investors had been "rightly fixated" on the bank's exposure to the venture world, which was getting hammered by the rapid run-up in interest rates, he wrote.

"However, dig just a little deeper, and you will find a much bigger set of problems," he wrote.

What Martin had spotted was a plunge in the value of securities in the bank's portfolio of "held to maturity" securities — Treasury bonds and government-backed mortgage securities that it owned as a backstop to its deposits.

Because the bank had no intention of selling the so-called HTM securities before they matured, it was permitted to value them on its books at the price at which they had been purchased, rather than at their values in real time.

But the value of the HTM holdings had declined as interest rates rose. That's a natural phenomenon: Fixed-income securities always decline in value as rates rise, and rise in value when rates fall.

If the bank were forced to sell off those holdings before maturity, Martin observed, it would be "functionally underwater."

SVB hadn't kept this issue a secret. In its financial disclosure for the third quarter that ended Sept. 30, 2022, which was Martin's source, it reported that its $93.3-billion held-to-maturity portfolio was worth only $77.4 billion in real time, for implicit losses of $15.9 billion. That was well more than the bank's $11.5 billion in total equity.

The bank's position didn't much improve in the fourth quarter. It reported then that its HTM portfolio had shrunk slightly, but was still showing unrealized losses of $15.16 billion. According to accounting rules, other securities designated as "available for sale" have to be carried at their real-time value, a process known as "marking to market."

The fact that SVB's problems were hiding in plain sight, right up to the point Friday when the bank was taken over and shut down by California and federal authorities, is certain to be near the top of the agenda as lawmakers, shareholders, customers and regulators examine the disaster.

VIRGINIA SHERWOOD CNBC

JUST WEEKS before the collapse, Jim Cramer, left, whose CNBC show is widely followed by amateur stock traders, called SVB a "merchant bank with a deposit base that Wall Street is mistakenly concerned about."

As the bank's primary regulator, it was the Federal Reserve's responsibility to recognize its growing problems and ensure it continued to meet standards of safety and soundness and financial stability, says Dennis Kelleher, chief executive of Better Markets, a Washington-based watchdog over financial institutions and government regulators.

The bank's operations bristled with "screaming red flags," Kelleher told me. These included a "hyper-concentration" of uninsured depositors from a narrow business sector — chiefly high-tech and biotech startups — as well as a dramatic mismatch between assets (that is, loans and investments) and liabilities (deposits) and the mounting tide of unrealized losses on its books.

"These were visible to anyone who wanted to look," Kelleher told me. "But apparently, the Fed was AWOL."

Kelleher observes that the Fed's policy of pegging interest rates near zero during the pandemic "was causing bubbles all over the place and reckless lending."

The Fed staged an unprecedented about-face on interest rates starting in March 2022 — raising rates by 4.5 percentage points in the space of nine months. "Banks were not going to be able to reposition their portfolios anywhere near as quickly as the Fed is changing policy."

> The warning signs 'were visible to anyone who wanted to look. But apparently, the Fed was AWOL.'
>
> — DENNIS KELLEHER, chief executive of Better Markets

That behooved the Fed to take a close look at all the banks. Kelleher says that Fed examiners should have demanded a plan last year from SVB's management or board for unwinding its large and growing impairment. It did not do so.

Another red flag for regulators should have been the bank's rapid growth, which almost certainly placed pressure on management skills in the corporate suite.

Deposits soared from $49.3 billion at the end of 2018 to $189.2 billion at the end of 2021, before falling back slightly to $173.1 billion at the end of last year.

The drawdown was a clue that the venture-funded sector had slowed down — venture firms were being less freewheeling with their money amid the run-up in interest rates, which also created business head winds for their portfolio companies, which in turn needed to draw down their deposit balances.

During the same period, the bank's asset holdings rose from $71 billion in 2018 to $211.8 billion at the end of last year. The vast majority of its fixed-rate assets, plainly, had been purchased when rates were close to zero and therefore were vulnerable to plunges in value as rates rose.

As much as two-thirds of those holdings were in the held-to-maturity portfolio, however, so they were carried on the bank's balance sheet at their purchase price, not the real value.

It's true that bank regulations applying to institutions the size of SVB were liberalized in 2018 by President Trump — in part due to lobbying by SVB itself, among others. But that didn't absolve the Fed of the obligation to scrutinize the bank's operations, Kelleher says.

The Fed wasn't the only entity that allowed the scale of SVB's problems to go unremarked. Questions are sure to be raised about the performance of the bank's auditing firm, KPMG. The firm issued a clean bill of health for the bank, known as an "unqualified" opinion, with the bank's annual report, released on Feb. 24.

KPMG hinted that it was concerned about the bank's method for projecting credit losses on some of its loans, but didn't rule them as improper. Instead, it designated the method a "critical audit matter," which typically refers to issues that are "especially challenging, subjective, or complex" but don't warrant a warning about a company's prospects for failure.

It's true that the crash in the bank's fortunes developed after Dec. 31, the endpoint of KPMG's audit. But the firm could have been more explicit about the perils lurking in the bank's financial structure.

Also deserving scrutiny is the role of venture investment firms and their portfolio companies. Many venture firms encouraged the startup companies they nurtured to do their banking business with SVB.

Indeed, having a financial relationship with SVB was treated as almost a badge of honor for a startup, a signal that it genuinely had business potential. The terms of loans that SVB made to startups often required that the borrowers do all their banking with SVB, a mandate that concentrated the bank's depositor base while exposing the startups to risks related to the FDIC's $250,000 cap on its deposit insurance protection. Some depositors kept uninsured cash balances in the hundreds of millions of dollars at SBV, an obviously reckless practice.

The complacency about SVB's condition as its problems accelerated is illustrated by its popularity among Wall Street stock pickers — its shares were rated "buy " by investment analysts at JP Morgan, Bank of America Securities, Jefferies and Goldman Sachs, among others, as recently as days before its collapse.

On Feb. 8, stock market guru Jim Cramer, whose daily CNBC program is widely followed by amateur stock traders, named shares of SVB Financial, the bank's parent company, as one of his "10 top performers" for 2023.

Cramer called SVB a "merchant bank with a deposit base that Wall Street is mistakenly concerned about." He argued that "long-term private equity and venture capital ... are not going away, and being a banker to these immense pools of capital has always been a very good business."

As it happens, Cramer's stock picks have had such an uneven record that one investment firm recently brought out an exchange-traded fund that allows investors to take the opposite side of Cramer's picks.

Anyone who disdained the recommendations of Cramer and the other enthusiastic analysts on SVB and shorted the stock rather than buying would have made a healthy profit. The shares closed at $106.04 on Thursday, and the next day were effectively worth zero.

Hiltzik writes a blog on latimes.com. Follow him on Facebook or on Twitter @hiltzikm or email michael.hiltzik @latimes.com.

Italy limits parental rights of gay couples

Activists denounce the government after it grants recognition only to the biological mother or father.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MILAN, Italy — Gay rights activists on Tuesday denounced as homophobic moves by Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's far-right-led government to limit recognition of parental rights to the biological parent only in the case of same-sex couples.

The city of Milan has been told to stop officially recording both parents in same-sex couples on city registers. It was the last major city to continue the practice that had been briefly adopted in Rome, Turin, Naples and elsewhere after Italy's high court in 2016 made it easier for gay people to adopt a partner's biological child.

The piece of bureaucracy is key to recognizing parental rights for a variety of everyday situations, including authorizing medical treatment and participating in class outings.

The president of Rainbow Families, Alessia Crocini, charged that Rome's move ordering Milan to stop automatically registering both parents in same-sex households exposed the government's homophobia.

"This government is the maximum expression of homophobia," she said. "Meloni says that for a child to grow up well, they need a mother and father, even if decades of research say otherwise. It is insulting to hundreds of thousands of families with two same-sex parents."

Yuri Guaiana, of the activist group All Out, said the move "throws thousands of families into uncertainty."

News of the move, which had been communicated to Milan Mayor Giuseppe Sala by the state-appointed prefect, came on the same day that a Senate commission blocked an attempt to recognize birth certificates of the children of same-sex couples issued by other EU states.

Sala pledged to fight for a law conferring rights equally on same-sex parents, but said in the meantime he could not risk putting workers in the city registry office at odds with the government's decision.

Sala's administration not only transcribed documents from other countries recognizing the rights of gay and lesbian parents, but also conferred the same recognition on same-sex parents of children born in Italy.

Other cities had already stopped the practice as administrations changed hands and political winds shifted in Rome. In the absence of such recognition, the non-birth mother or father must go through the adoption process to establish parental rights — something that can take years.

Former Turin Mayor Chiara Appendino, the first mayor to recognize the rights of both same-sex parents without seeking court approval, said the new ban "is only the last slap against these families." She joined Sala's call for a law recognizing their rights.

Italy's Gay Party, formed in 2020 to give political heft to the fight against anti-gay discrimination, estimates that 150,000 children are affected by Italy's failure to recognize the rights of both parents in same-sex marriages. That includes hundreds in the city of Milan.

Gay Party spokesman Fabrizio Marrazzo called on Italian mayors to subvert the government's request and register both same-sex parents in an act of civil disobedience.

"When norms are discriminatory, mayors need to have the courage to say so," he said.

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Cybercrooks find a fertile market in India

Scams target people in places where the internet, smartphones have only recently become common.

By Parth M.N.

Parth M.N. For The Times

"EVEN a supposedly minor scam can wreck the stability of a family," says Ravindra Gaikwad, who was head of the cybercell investigation unit in Beed, India, last year. The unit tries to educate the public about online fraud.

BEED, India — Ravindra Gaikwad did what is expected of cyberpolice chasing an online scam: He followed the money.

But what initially seemed like an ordinary fraud case in his small town in western India ended up sending him on a 2,000-mile trip across three Indian states.

Only then did he begin to understand how sophisticated such criminal enterprises were becoming in his country.

"Scamsters across India are exploiting gullible people in small towns and villages where the internet and smartphones have only recently become common," he said.

India has long held a reputation as a home to online scammers targeting victims in far richer nations such as the United States. Last year, federal prosecutors in Georgia announced the indictment of multiple India-based call centers and their directors, charging them with conspiring to forward tens of millions of scam calls to American consumers.

"These India-based call centers allegedly scared their victims and stole their money, including some victims' entire life savings," then-U.S. Atty. Kurt Erskine of the Northern District of Georgia said at the time.

Now, with the rapid expansion of the internet in developing nations, India is itself proving a fertile market for its homegrown scammers.

Some 47% of the population now has internet access, up from 15% eight years ago. Even small eateries in villages and towns have moved toward contactless payments — a trend that was limited to major cities until a few years ago.

According to the Internet and Mobile Assn. of India, about half of India's 692 million active internet users engage in online transactions. The group's 2022 report predicted that India would have 900 million active internet users by 2025, meaning the untapped market for scams is skyrocketing.

In turn, cybercrimes such as phishing, password fraud, persuading victims to download screen-monitoring apps, or setting up fake UPI links and QR codes are witnessing a surge.

From March 2018 to December 2021, India reported more than 250,000 cases of cyberfraud involving about $96 million, the Ministry of Finance told legislators last year. Only $7.8 million of that has been recovered.

Devidas Tuljapurkar, joint secretary of All India Bank Employees Assn., traces the rise to Digital India, a program launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015.

"Digital India should have gone hand in hand with digital literacy," he said. "But that didn't happen and a large section of the society is still inexperienced with online financial transactions. That vulnerability is being exploited. Online scams have become an industry."

Though cybercrime is still far more common in the United States, which reported online fraud worth $3.3 billion in 2020 alone, its rise is all the more surprising in a country where 90% of the population earns less than $300 per month.

Gaikwad, 49, was the head of the cybercell investigation unit in the city of Beed, in the state of Maharashtra, last March when the headmaster of a local Urdu middle school reported that he had been scammed.

The previous December, Mohammad Abdul Rahim, 52, was randomly added to a WhatsApp group through an unknown phone number.

The name of the group made him curious: KBC. That's short for Kaun Banega Crorepati — the popular Indian version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." Soon after being added to the group, Rahim received a video message congratulating him on winning $30,000 and a car.

Rahim grew convinced of the message's authenticity in part because it contained a neatly designed poster of the game show. The message was followed by a phone call. If he wanted to move forward with the offer, the person on the other end said, he would have to deposit money for taxes.

In the next two days, Rahim sent about $2,100 in three installments via Google Pay.

Over three months, scammers used an effective combination of threats and enticements to persuade Rahim to fork over $35,000, fully depleting his bank account.

When Rahim inquired about the car and money, he was told to keep quiet and not tell anyone about the lottery. If he did, he was told his file would be closed, meaning he would lose the amount he had deposited and miss out on the lottery too.

"So I kept sending them money," Rahim said. "I feel stupid and embarrassed."

Gaikwad's initial investigation of the phone numbers and bank account details led him to five 21-year-old men from the state of Bihar — 1,100 miles to the east.

"They used to handle several such bank accounts," Gaikwad said. "Their job was to withdraw money from these accounts and route it forward." The five were arrested and they are currently free on bail as the case proceeds.

They, however, are believed to be small fish. Three of the five worked as laborers and two were still in school. Their role ended with aggregating money they had received from small-scale victims like Rahim. In exchange, they received a commission of roughly $70, authorities charged.

Gaikwad then tracked down four men who he believes processed the money aggregated in Bihar. The men, aged 22 to 28, were from West Champaran, another district of Bihar. One of them, with a master's degree in technology, handled 150 bank accounts by himself, authorities said. These four were also arrested, have been charged and are in jail.

Most victims, Gaikwad said, were people from small towns and villages with modest incomes.

"Even a supposedly minor scam can wreck the stability of a family," he said. "We are trying to educate people about online frauds. Until then, we advise people to not do an online transaction on weekends or after 5 p.m., when banks are shut. It slows down the investigation."

Sheetalkumar Ballal, the current senior police inspector of the Beed cyberinvestigations unit, said the chances of recovering the amount are higher if the victim reaches out within the first hour.

"We call it the golden hour," he said. "The money is often stuck at the payment gateway after being transferred. It is easier to retrieve the money from there. Otherwise, we end up chasing people from different parts of the country."

In October 2022, Gaikwad and his team arrested the four men from West Champaran, which helped them track the money trail.

From Bihar it went through several different bank accounts, eventually stopping at a trader in Surat — 1,300 miles west in the state of Gujarat. The trader had received $1.5 million from various accounts handled by the four men from West Champaran.

Gaikwad called the trader in for questioning. He expected to close the investigation having discovered what he believed was the final piece of the puzzle. The tangled web of bank accounts had given him sleepless nights. But after nearly a year, he had finally reached the end.

Except the trader was clueless about the scam.

He was under the impression, Gaikwad concluded, that the money was payment for the embroidered clothes he had exported to Pakistan. "That is where the kingpin is sitting," Gaikwad said.

A suspect in Pakistan has been identified. He is thought to have coordinated with the four men from West Champaran and directed them to pay for the garments he would import from different traders in Surat. Those traders had an agent handling their accounts.

The agent would accept money coming from the accounts handled by the men from West Champaran and pass it on to traders depending on their export orders.

"The traders thought they were being paid for their exports," Gaikwad said. "But it was being paid through money swindled from different parts of India. The man in Pakistan would essentially get his embroidered clothes for free."

The police cybercell unit has no authority to arrest a suspect in another country, so despite the headway, Rahim has yet to get back his money, equivalent to three years of his salary.

"I am struggling to pay my monthly installments," said Rahim, who lives in Beed with his wife and two adult daughters. "The money I lost in the scam was my home loan. I feel like I let my family down."

Parth M.N. is a special correspondent.

U.S. says Russian fighter jet hit American drone

By Karl Ritter

Roman Chop Associated Press

IN UKRAINE, a Russian missile struck an apartment building in Kramatorsk on Tuesday, killing at least one person. Above, emergency workers at the scene.

KYIV, Ukraine — A Russian fighter jet struck the propeller of a U.S. surveillance drone over the Black Sea on Tuesday in a "brazen violation of international law," causing American forces to bring down the unmanned aerial vehicle, the U.S. said.

But Russia insisted its warplanes didn't hit the MQ-9 Reaper drone. Instead, it said the drone maneuvered sharply and crashed into the water after an encounter with Russian fighter jets that had been scrambled to intercept it near Russian-occupied Crimea.

The incident, which added to Russia-U.S. tensions over Moscow's war in Ukraine, appeared to be the first time since the height of the Cold War that a U.S. aircraft was brought down after an encounter with a Russian warplane.

President Biden was briefed on the incident by national security advisor Jake Sullivan, according to White House national security spokesman John F. Kirby. He added that State Department officials would be speaking directly with their Russian counterparts and "expressing our concerns over this unsafe and unprofessional intercept."

Ned Price, a spokesman for the State Department, called it a "brazen violation of international law." He said the U.S. summoned the Russian ambassador to lodge a protest, and the U.S. ambassador to Russia, Lynne Tracy, has made similar representations in Moscow.

The U.S. European Command said two Russian Su-27 fighter jets intercepted the drone while it was operating in international airspace. It said one of the Russian fighters struck the propeller of the MQ-9, causing U.S. forces to bring it down in international waters.

Before that, the Su-27s dumped fuel on the MQ-9 and flew in front of it several times in "a reckless, environmentally unsound and unprofessional manner," the U.S. European Command said in a statement from Stuttgart, Germany.

"This incident demonstrates a lack of competence in addition to being unsafe and unprofessional," it added.

Air Force Gen. James B. Hecker, commander of U.S. Air Forces Europe and Air Forces Africa, said the drone was "conducting routine operations in international airspace when it was intercepted and hit by a Russian aircraft, resulting in a crash and complete loss of the MQ-9." He added that "in fact, this unsafe and unprofessional act by the Russians nearly caused both aircraft to crash."

Pentagon spokesman Air Force Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said the incident occurred at 7:03 a.m. Central European Time over international waters, and well clear of Ukraine, after the Russian jets had flown in the vicinity of the drone for 30 to 40 minutes. There did not appear to be any communications between the aircraft before the collision, Ryder added.

The MQ-9 is capable of carrying munitions, but Ryder would not say whether it was armed. The U.S. had not recovered the crashed drone, U.S. Air Forces Europe said in a statement, and neither had Russia, Ryder said.

He said it appeared the Russian aircraft also was damaged in the collision, but the U.S. has confirmed that it did land, although Ryder would not say where.

Russia's Defense Ministry said the U.S. drone was flying over the Black Sea near Crimea and intruded in an area that was declared off limits by Russia as part of what it calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine, causing the military to scramble fighters to intercept it.

"As a result of a sharp maneuver, the MQ-9 drone went into unguided flight with a loss of altitude and crashed into the water," it said. "The Russian fighters didn't use their weapons, didn't come into contact with the unmanned aerial vehicle, and they safely returned to their base."

The Russian ambassador to Washington, Anatoly Antonov, described the U.S. drone flight as a "provocation" and argued that there was no reason for American military aircraft and warships to be near Russia's borders.

Speaking after meeting with Karen Donfried, the U.S. assistant secretary of State for European affairs, Antonov insisted that the Russian warplanes didn't hit the American drone or fire their weapons. He added that Moscow wants "pragmatic" ties with Washington, adding that "we don't want any confrontation between the U.S. and Russia."

Moscow has repeatedly voiced concern about U.S. intelligence flights close to the Crimean peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in 2014 and illegally annexed. The Kremlin has charged that by providing weapons to Ukraine and sharing intelligence information with Kyiv, the U.S. and its allies have in effect become engaged in the conflict.

Kirby emphasized that the incident wouldn't deter the U.S. from continuing its missions in the area.

"If the message is that they want to deter or dissuade us from flying, and operating in international airspace, over the Black Sea, then that message will fail," Kirby said. "We're going to continue to fly and operate in international airspace over international waters. The Black Sea belongs to no one nation."

The U.S. European Command said the incident followed a pattern of dangerous actions by Russian pilots while interacting with U.S. and allied aircraft over international airspace, including over the Black Sea.

"These aggressive actions by Russian aircrew are dangerous and could lead to miscalculation and unintended escalation," it said.

Gen. David Berger, commandant of the Marine Corps, said this type of collision is his greatest concern, both in that part of Europe as well as in the Pacific.

"Probably my biggest worry both there and in the Pacific is an aggressive Russia or China pilot or vessel captain, or something gets too close, doesn't realize where they are, and causes a collision," Berger said Tuesday.

In Ukraine, a Russian missile struck an apartment building Tuesday in the eastern city of Kramatorsk, killing at least one person and wounding nine others in one of the major urban areas in the Donetsk region.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky posted a video showing gaping holes in the facade of the low-rise building, which bore the brunt of the strike that damaged nine apartment blocks, a kindergarten, a bank branch and two cars, said regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, speaking with workers at a helicopter factory in southern Siberia, again cast the conflict in Ukraine as an existential one for Russia.

"For us, it's not a geopolitical task," Putin said, "it's the task of survival of Russian statehood and the creation of conditions for the future development of our country."

Russia had welcomed a Chinese peace proposal, but Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Kyiv's refusal to talk leaves Moscow with only military options.

The Russian onslaught has focused on the devastated eastern city of Bakhmut, where Kyiv's troops have been fending off attacks for seven months and which has become a symbol of resistance.

Zelensky discussed Bakhmut with the military brass and they were unanimous in their determination to face down the Russian onslaught, according to the presidential office.

Ritter writes for the Associated Press. AP writers Lolita C. Baldor, Tara Copp, Zeke Miller, Aamer Madhani and Matthew Lee in Washington and Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed to this report.

EPA moves to safeguard drinking water

Agency is proposing the first federal limits on 'forever chemicals,' saying thousands of lives would be saved.

By Michael Phillis and Matthew Daly

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday proposed the first federal limits on harmful "forever chemicals" in drinking water, a long-awaited protection the agency said would save thousands of lives and prevent serious illnesses, including cancer.

The plan would limit toxic PFAS chemicals to the lowest level that tests can detect. PFAS, or per- and polyfluorinated substances, are a group of compounds that are widespread, dangerous and expensive to remove from water. They don't degrade in the environment and are linked to a broad range of health issues, including low birth weight and kidney cancer.

"The science is clear that long-term exposure to PFAS is linked to significant health risks," Radhika Fox, assistant EPA administrator for water, said in an interview.

Fox called the federal proposal a "transformational change" for improving the safety of drinking water in the United States. The agency estimates the rule could reduce PFAS exposure for nearly 100 million Americans, decreasing rates of cancer, heart attacks and birth complications.

The chemicals had been used since the 1940s in consumer products and industry, including in nonstick pans and food packaging. Their use is now mostly phased out in the U.S., but some still remain.

The proposal would set strict limits of four parts per trillion, the lowest level that can be reliably measured, for two common types of PFAS compounds called PFOA and PFOS. In addition, the EPA wants to regulate the combined amount of four other types of PFAS. Water providers will have to monitor for PFAS.

The public will have a chance to comment, and the agency can make changes before issuing a final rule, expected by the end of the year.

The Assn. of State Drinking Water Administrators called the proposal "a step in the right direction" but said compliance will be challenging. Despite available federal money, "significant rate increases will be required for most of the systems" that must remove PFAS, the group said Tuesday.

Travis Long News & Observer

"COMMUNITIES across this country have suffered far too long from the ever-present threat of PFAS pollution," Michael S. Regan, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency, shown in 2021, said Tuesday.

Environmental and public health advocates have called for federal regulation of PFAS chemicals for years. Over the last decade, the EPA has repeatedly strengthened its protective, voluntary health thresholds for the chemicals but has not imposed limits on water providers.

Public concern has increased in recent years as testing reveals PFAS chemicals in a growing list of communities that are often near manufacturing plants or Air Force bases.

Until now, only a handful of states have issued PFAS regulations, and none has set limits as strict as what the EPA is proposing. By regulating PFOA and PFOS at the minimum amounts that tests can detect, the EPA is proposing the tightest possible standards that are technically feasible, experts said.

"This is a really historic moment," said Melanie Benesh, vice president of government affairs at the Environmental Working Group. "There are many communities that have had PFAS in their water for decades who have been waiting for a long time for this announcement to come out."

The agency said its proposal will protect everyone, including vulnerable communities, and reduce illness on a massive scale. The EPA wants water providers to conduct testing, notify the public when PFAS are found and remove the compounds when levels are too high.

Utilities that have high levels of a contaminant are typically given time to fix problems, but they could face fines or loss of federal grants if problems persist.

The American Chemistry Council, which represents large chemical companies, slammed the EPA's "misguided approach" and said, "these low limits will likely result in billions of dollars in compliance costs."

In a statement Tuesday, the group said it has "serious concerns with the underlying science used to develop" the proposed rule, adding: "It's critical that EPA gets the science right."

The proposal would also regulate other types of PFAS like GenX Chemicals, which manufacturers used as a substitute when PFOA and PFOS were phased out of consumer products. The proposal would regulate the cumulative health threat of those compounds and mandate treatment if that threat is too high.

"Communities across this country have suffered far too long from the ever-present threat of PFAS pollution," EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan said. The EPA's proposal could prevent tens of thousands of PFAS-related illnesses, he said, and stands as a "major step toward safeguarding all our communities from these dangerous contaminants."

Emily Donovan, co-founder of Clean Cape Fear, which advocates for cleaning up a PFAS-contaminated stretch of North Carolina, said it was important to make those who released the compounds into the environment pay cleanup costs.

The EPA recently made $2 billion available to states to get rid of contaminants such as PFAS and will release billions more in coming years. The agency also is providing technical support to smaller communities that will soon be forced to install treatment systems, and there's funding in the 2021 infrastructure law for water system upgrades.

Still, it will be expensive for utilities to install new equipment, and the burden will be especially tough for small towns with fewer resources.

"This is a problem that has been handed over to utilities through no fault of their own," said Sri Vedachalam, director of water equity and climate resilience at Environmental Consulting & Technology Inc.

Many communities will need to balance the new PFAS requirements with removing poisonous lead pipes and replacing aged water mains prone to rupturing, Vedachalam said.

Fox said there "isn't a one-size answer" to how communities will prioritize their needs but said billions of dollars in federal resources are available for water improvements.

With federal help, water providers that serve metropolitan areas should be able to spread out costs in a way "no one will notice," said Scott Faber, senior vice president of government affairs at the Environmental Working Group, an advocacy organization that works to get toxic chemicals out of food, water, clothing and other items.

Several states have already imposed PFAS drinking water limits. Officials in Michigan, which has the tightest standards of any state, said costs to remove PFAS in communities where it was found were reasonable.

Erik Olson of the Natural Resources Defense Council called the EPA proposal crucial to protect public health. "Setting strong standards will help ensure the fundamental right of every family to have safe water flowing from their kitchen tap," he said.

Phillis and Daly write for the Associated Press.

Ohio sues railroad over toxic accident

State wants to make sure Norfolk Southern pays for the cleanup after the derailment in East Palestine.

Associated Press

Ohio filed a lawsuit against railroad Norfolk Southern to make sure it pays for the cleanup and environmental damage caused by a fiery train derailment on the Ohio-Pennsylvania border last month, the state's attorney general said Tuesday.

The federal lawsuit also seeks to force the company to pay for groundwater and soil monitoring in the years ahead and economic losses in the village of East Palestine and surrounding areas, said Ohio Atty. Gen. Dave Yost.

"The fallout from this highly preventable accident is going to reverberate throughout Ohio for many years to come," Yost said.

No one was hurt in the Feb. 3 derailment, but half of the roughly 5,000 residents of East Palestine had to evacuate for days when responders intentionally burned toxic chemicals in some of the derailed cars to prevent an uncontrolled explosion, leaving residents with lingering health concerns. Government officials say tests over the last month haven't found dangerous levels of chemicals in the air or water in the area.

Gene J. Puskar Associated Press

CHEMICALS in some derailed cars were intentionally burned to prevent an uncontrolled explosion.

Norfolk Southern Chief Executive Alan Shaw apologized before Congress last week for the effect the derailment has had on the area, but he didn't make specific commitments to pay for long-term health and economic harm.

The railroad has promised more than $20 million so far to help the Ohio community recover while also announcing several voluntary safety upgrades.

Norfolk Southern said Tuesday in a response to the lawsuit that it was listening to concerns from the community and planning to take additional steps to deal with some of those.

The railroad is working on creating a long-term medical compensation fund, a way to provide protection for home sellers if their property loses value because of the derailment, and improving drinking water protections, it said in a statement.

The lawsuit also asks for the railroad to reimburse first responders and state agencies for the costs of dealing with the disaster.

How much money the state is seeking isn't known yet because the response is ongoing, but Yost made it clear the cost will be enormous. "This was an epic disaster. The cleanup is going to be expensive," he said.

Ohio officials met with Norfolk Southern representatives on Monday and talked about several possible ways to help the people in East Palestine, including enhancing the village's water treatment operations, Yost said.

The state attorney general said he was pleased that the railroad has indicated it wants to do the right thing and that the lawsuit will make sure it keeps its promise.

Many in East Palestine remain outraged at the railroad and worried about what will become of the village.

Those fears include concerns about their long-term health, their house values and the economic future for local businesses.

McConnell in rehab to aid recovery after fall

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell has been released from the hospital after treatment for a concussion and will continue to recover at an inpatient rehabilitation facility, a spokesman said.

McConnell's office said his doctors discovered over the weekend that he had also suffered a "minor rib fracture" after he tripped and fell at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in Washington on March 8.

"Leader McConnell's concussion recovery is proceeding well and the Leader was discharged from the hospital today," McConnell spokesman David Popp said in a statement Monday. "At the advice of his physician, the next step will be a period of physical therapy at an inpatient rehabilitation facility before he returns home."

The office did not give any additional details on his condition or say how long McConnell would be out. Concussions can be serious injuries and take time for recovery, and even a single incident of concussion can limit a person's abilities as they recover.

It is unclear how his extended absence will affect Senate proceedings. The Senate returns to Washington on Tuesday evening after the weekend off and is scheduled to be in session for the rest of March.

The Kentucky senator, 81, was at a dinner after a reception for the Senate Leadership Fund, a campaign committee aligned with him, when he tripped and fell.

McConnell's head injury comes almost four years after he tripped and fell at his home in Kentucky, suffering a shoulder fracture that required surgery. The Senate had just started a summer recess, and he worked from home for some weeks as he recovered.

At the start of the COVID-19 crisis, McConnell opened up about his early childhood experience fighting polio. He described how his mother insisted that he stay off his feet as a toddler and worked with him through a determined physical therapy regime. He has acknowledged some difficulty climbing stairs in adulthood.

First elected in 1984, McConnell in January became the longest-serving Senate leader when the new Congress convened, breaking the previous record of 16 years.

McConnell is one of several senators who have been absent lately because of illness or hospitalization.

Sen. John Fetterman (D-Pa.), 53, who suffered a stroke during his campaign last year, was expected to remain out for some weeks as he receives care for clinical depression. And Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), 89, said this month that she had been hospitalized to be treated for shingles.

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Biden plans to do eulogy after Carter's death

He says predecessor, now in hospice care, asked in 2021 that he speak at his funeral.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ATLANTA — President Biden says he plans to deliver the eulogy for former President Jimmy Carter, who remains under hospice care at his home in Georgia.

Biden told donors at a California fundraiser Monday about a 2021 visit with the 39th president, whom Biden has known since he was a young senator from Delaware supporting Carter's 1976 presidential campaign.

"He asked me to do his eulogy," Biden said, then stopped himself. "Excuse me; I shouldn't say that."

Carter, who at 98 is the longest-lived U.S. president, announced Feb. 18 that he would spend his remaining days at home receiving end-of-life care, forgoing further medical intervention.

The Carter Center in Atlanta and the former president's family members have not disclosed details of his condition, though Biden alluded to Carter's 2015 cancer diagnosis.

"I spent time with Jimmy Carter, and it's finally caught up with him. But they found a way to keep him going for a lot longer than they anticipated, because they found a breakthrough," Biden said in San Diego County's Rancho Sante Fe.

The president and First Lady Jill Biden visited Carter and his wife, Rosalynn, 95, at their home in Plains, Ga., a few months after Biden took office in 2021.

Biden was the first U.S. senator to endorse Carter's 1976 presidential bid, breaking from the Washington establishment that was soon shocked as the former Georgia governor went on to win the Democratic nomination.

Biden's presidency represents a turnabout, of sorts, for Carter's political standing. The Georgian served just one term in the White House after losing to Republican Ronald Reagan in a 1980 landslide that prompted top Democrats to keep their distance from the former president, at least publicly, for decades.

Presidents Clinton and Obama did not have close relationships with Carter. And the long-shot presidential candidates who sometimes ventured to Plains over the years typically did so privately.

But ahead of the 2020 election cycle, as the Carters' global humanitarian work and advocacy of democracy through the Carter Center garnered respect, Democratic politicians began publicly visiting southern Georgia. And with Biden's election, Carter again found a genuine friend and ally in the Oval Office.

Some family members have confirmed that the former president will have a state funeral in Washington, D.C., and a private funeral and burial in Plains.

Former and sitting presidents often speak at the state funerals of their predecessors, sometimes even crossing the political aisle.

Clinton spoke at Republican Richard Nixon's funeral in 1994. In 2007, Carter eulogized Gerald Ford, the Republican he had defeated to win the presidency. The erstwhile rivals had become close friends after their presidencies, and had agreed that whichever lived longer would pay tribute at the other's funeral.

When George H.W. Bush died in 2018, fellow Republican Donald Trump attended as sitting president, but the only former president to speak at the Washington National Cathedral service was the late president's son George W. Bush.

ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

DURING HIS visit, President Biden meets with community members in Monterey Park, the site of a Jan. 21 mass shooting. He also signed an executive order to curb gun violence and enhance background checks.

President consoles Monterey Park

[**Firearms,** from A1]

mittee and the Democratic Grassroots Victory Fund from about 40 donors, according to a DNC official. On Tuesday night, he raised more than $1 million for the two groups at an event in the Tournament Hills community in Las Vegas.

Biden's visit to Monterey Park comes as the U.S. has already seen 110 mass shootings so far in 2023, according to the independent data collection and research group Gun Violence Archive. The group defines a mass shooting as an incident with four or more people injured or killed. The Jan. 21 shooting at Star Ballroom Dance Studio was one of three mass shootings to grip California in just eight days.

On Tuesday, Biden signed an executive order directing U.S. Atty. Gen. Merrick Garland to ensure that licensed gun dealers are aware and conduct the required background checks before purchases, according to a senior administration official who briefed reporters Monday, ahead of the announcement. The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, signed into law in June, requires federally licensed gun dealers to run background checks on buyers.

The latest action stops short of Biden's call for universal background checks, but White House officials contend that it will increase the number of gun dealers who are compliant without additional legislation. Biden will also ask Garland to develop a plan to bar gun dealers whose federal licenses have been revoked from continuing to sell firearms.

The president also directed his Cabinet to develop a plan to help communities in the aftermath of a mass shooting, much like how the Federal Emergency Management Agency mobilizes resources after a natural disaster.

He will also encourage a federal government study that "analyzes and exposes how gun manufacturers aggressively market firearms to civilians, especially minors, including by using military imagery."

The executive order also calls for raising awareness of "red flag" laws, which allow police to confiscate weapons from people deemed to be a threat to themselves or others, as well as for safe storage of guns to prevent them from falling into the hands of children.

Biden acknowledged that those executive actions do not go far enough, and called on Congress to take more aggressive action.

"Let's be clear. None of this absolves Congress from the responsibility ... to pass universal background checks, eliminate gun manufacture immunity. And I'm determined to once again ban assault weapons and high-capacity magazines," he said.

While serving in the U.S. Senate, Biden joined Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California in leading the successful effort to ban assault weapons in 1994. Mass shootings declined over the next decade. The law expired in 2004 and has not been renewed. Mass shootings have tripled since then, Biden said.

"Enough. Do something," he urged Congress. "Do something big."

Such measures appear to have no chance of passing the GOP-controlled House.

Biden has instead resorted to unilateral action to try to further tackle gun violence. In 2021, Biden directed his administration to tighten restrictions on so-called ghost guns, untraceable weapons that can be assembled from parts purchased online.

During his visit to Monterey Park, Biden said the tragedy that unfolded in the tight-knit Asian American community "pierced the soul of this nation."

He noted that people of all backgrounds and ages had bonded over their love of ballroom dance and music, and the night was extra special because of the celebration of the Lunar New Year.

"But as we all saw, a day of festivity and light turned into a day of fear and darkness," he said. "Vibrant dances and music were replaced by vigils and memorials."

Biden recited the name of each person who was killed, describing their importance to the community and the joy they brought to their families and loved ones.

"I promise you the day will come when the memory of your loved one brings a smile to your lips before it brings a tear to your eye," said Biden, who lost his first wife and a daughter in car crash in 1972 and a son to cancer in 2015. "That's when you know you're going to make it. My prayer for all of you is that day will come sooner than later."

Mehta reported from Monterey Park and Subramanian from Washington.

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Folks find reasons to stay in flooded town

[**Pajaro,** from A1]
Tuesday, and tens of thousands in the state were without power.

Pajaro — a town of about 3,000 people, many of them migrant farmworkers — may not recover for a long time.

"Areas that were flooded and remain flooded are still under an evacuation order, so therefore it's not going to be a matter of days," Nicholas Pasculli, a Monterey County spokesperson, said during a news briefing. "We want people to get back into their homes as soon as possible, and we're going to do whatever we can to make that happen, but there's going to be cases, without a doubt, that people will not be able to return to some of their homes."

The town appeared lifeless Tuesday. Sandbags sat at the entrances of bars, beauty salons and markets. Around the area, streets had turned into miniature lakes. The water covered the tires of parked cars and gushed from underneath manhole coverings. Potatoes, lemons and food packaging lay on streets where the water had receded.

Sheriff's cruisers and the National Guard patrolled as television reporters stood by flooded areas for news updates.

Officials said flooding wasn't the only risk in the area. Major utility lines run through the levee under Highway 1, and a wastewater treatment facility is downstream.

"If the water continues to erode through the levee such that it reenters the river system ... it could overwhelm the river system downstream of Highway 1," where the wastewater treatment plant for Watsonville sits, said Mark Strudley, executive director of the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency.

If the water overtops or seeps through the levee, Strudley said, "we stand to destroy parts of the plant and may end up releasing untreated sewage to the floodplain, to the river and then ultimately to the Monterey Bay."

Many in Pajaro remain under "do not drink" orders as there is no potable water because of the floods, according to Monterey County Undersheriff Keith Boyd. That includes one school, two mobile home parks and about 800 homes.

Despite the treacherous conditions in Pajaro, many families declined to leave because some residents who were evacuated in January returned to find that their homes had been broken into, Alvarez said.

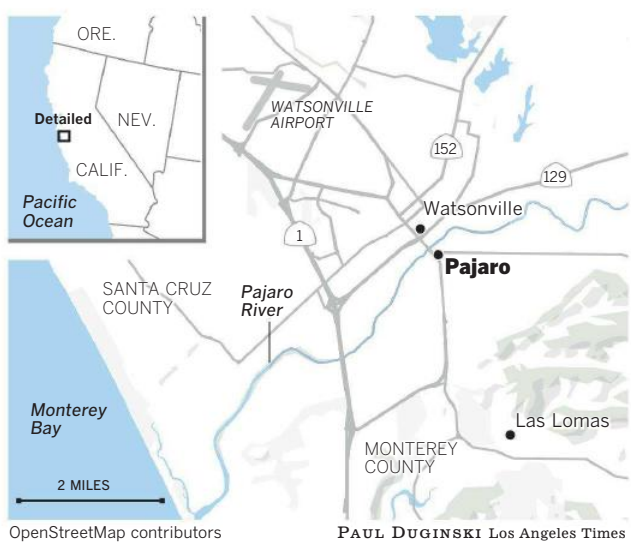
She stayed behind this time in part because of her husband's health. He has liver cancer and must see his doctor once a week for chemotherapy; his next appointment is Sunday.

NOAH BERGER Associated Press

OWNERS Pamela and Patrick Cerruti empty coins from Pajaro Coin Laundry on Tuesday as murky floodwaters surround the machines. "We lost it all. That's half a million dollars of equipment," said Pamela.

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

ABANDONED CARS on Salinas Road in Pajaro. Despite the conditions, many families stayed put.



OpenStreetMap contributors

PAUL DUGINSKI Los Angeles Times

"COVID poses a threat to him," she said. "We can't be in a shelter right now, not with his immune system being so weak. It's better for us to be here in our own home, sleeping in our beds and eating the food we have in our fridge."

Alvarez said the flooding illustrated how Pajaro is often viewed by people from outside.

"The counties are willing to let this part of town get flooded," Alvarez said.

Officials knew for decades that Pajaro was vulnerable but did not prioritize levee repairs in part because they believed it did not make financial sense to protect the low-income area, interviews and records show.

After a 1995 flood that killed two people and caused up to $95 million in economic damage, officials said they would address the problem, Alvarez recalled. They never did.

"We are the most hard-working people and we help this economy," she said.

Loreto, her neighbor, agreed.

"We feel abandoned sometimes," Loreto said. "Ever since I moved here, I've always heard about the 1995 flooding and this view that this part of town is so bad and extremely poor."

She pointed to Watsonville, across the river in Santa Cruz County, and said that side was "*lo mas* nice" — the nicest part.

The women said that because their community sits between Santa Cruz and Monterey counties, they feel forgotten and that neither county is willing to help.

It's not an uncommon view in Pajaro.

Florencia Rios, 48, and her husband said they had heard about what happened during the 1995 flood.

"It was made clear to me that this side of town isn't worth much in terms of businesses, so the river is allowed to flood this town," Rios said, gazing at Watsonville. "It feels like they have more resources there."

"You can definitely see the difference," said her husband, Enrique Olvera, 47.

The couple worried about what would come next — whether they will receive assistance, when there will be work. They have no money saved up and used whatever they had left to pay the March rent.

"We don't even know where to seek help," Olvera said. "We just need a little help, some food and water at the very least."

Adding to the challenge is last week's levee breach, which continues to put pressure on Pajaro and on nearby Watsonville as the Pajaro River swells from the storm.

County and state officials have been working to stabilize the about 350-foot breach by laying rocks and boulders to prevent it from getting larger, but there is still no official timeline for when it will be fixed.

"It's been a very challenging site; conditions are very challenging," Monterey County water resources engineer Shaunna Murray said during the briefing. "We have a small gap that needs to be stabilized. It's a fairly deep area and challenging to access."

Once the levee is stabilized, it will "take a couple of weeks to raise the levee repair and make it impermeable to water," she said.

Officials were considering "manually breaching a section to relieve pressure," said Zach Friend, a Santa Cruz County supervisor whose district includes parts of Watsonville, which is now threatened by the swelling Pajaro River.

The location of the gap in the middle of Highway 1 across a shallow bridge would make plugging it difficult, Strudley said, adding that officials have three options.

"One thing you can do is open up the levee downstream of that point — a little ways downstream, but upstream of the wastewater treatment plant — to let the water back out onto the floodplain," Strudley said.

The second option "is actually opening up Highway 1. Basically cutting through Highway 1 and the low spot, which is to the south of the river, and letting the water out of the floodplain."

The last option, he said, is to do nothing, which could suffice because the storm didn't hit as hard as expected. A decision was likely going to be made late Tuesday.

As the floodwaters' threat mounted in Pajaro, Rios and Olvera said they feared leaving because they'd been told they wouldn't be allowed back in. Without money or means of getting to evacuation shelters, they said, they would be in an even worse position.

They said they weren't alone: At least six families with children face the same challenge they do.

Alvarez, meanwhile, glanced over at two sheriff's cruisers parked in the middle of the road near a bridge. She couldn't understand why they would not let residents go in and out to purchase water and food — or, at the very least, why they couldn't provide that to them.

"I'm from Mexico," she said. "We're used to dealing with disasters there. We know how to survive, we just need a little support."

Alvarez arrived from Mexico two years before Pajaro flooded in 1995. "It took two months to return home," she said. "Two months — imagine coming back home and having to throw away all the food you had purchased and having no work?"

These recent storms felt worse, she said. The strawberries, cabbage and broccoli grown in the region were probably destroyed. Work would disappear again.

Loreto glanced down at the parking lot below.

"I work at the gas station behind this building," she said, pointing with her thumb. "I don't know when they'll open that gas station."

Vives reported from Pajaro, Rust from Menlo Park and Smith from Los Angeles.

COVID deaths at senior facility lead to charges

[**COVID,** from A1]
ted a patient from a New York psychiatric unit. Silverado Beverly Place's own protocols required it to not admit anyone from a high-risk area like New York City, which was considered an epicenter of COVID-19 at the time.

Prosecutors say the patient was not tested for the coronavirus when they were admitted and showed symptoms the next morning. But after they tested positive, they were not quarantined, according to the criminal charges.

Management at the facility did not block visitors who traveled domestically or internationally within 14 days to areas where COVID-19 cases were confirmed, prosecutors allege.

"These careless decisions created conditions that needlessly exposed Silverado staff and its residents to serious injury and — tragically — death," Dist. Atty. George Gascón said in a statement.

Three managers were charged with 13 felony counts of elder endangerment and five felony counts of violation causing death. The latter charges were filed in connection with the facility's management of its employees' health and safety. Loren Bernard Shook, Jason Michael Russo and Kimberly Cheryl Butrum were charged along with the Irvine company Silverado Senior Living Management Inc.

Prosecutors say the patient from New York was admitted to Silverado Beverly Place because of financial considerations.

MATT HAMILTON Los Angeles Times

PROSECUTORS SAY Silverado Beverly Place in L.A. put profit ahead of safety by admitting a patient from a COVID-19 hot spot without conducting a virus test.

Investigators with the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health conducted a 2½-year investigation into Silverado Beverly Place, whose parent company manages several care facilities across the country.

An email to Silverado Senior Living Management seeking comment on the charges was not immediately answered.

Gascón, during a news conference in downtown Los Angeles, also read the names of the 14 people who died.

They are nurse Brittany Bruner-Ringo, Elizabeth Cohen, Joseph Manduke, Catherine Apothaker, Jake Khorsandi, Albert Sarnoff, Dolores Sarnoff, Myrna Frank, Frank Piumetti, Jay Tedeman, Luba Paz, Kaye Kiddoo, Richard Herman and Michael Horn.

Bruner-Ringo told her mother that the newly admitted patient was showing signs of illness — profuse sweating, a "productive" cough and a fever close to 103 degrees, her mother told The Times.

"I said, 'Those are definitely problematic,' " recalled Kim Bruner-Ringo, a veteran nurse in Oklahoma City.

The patient was so ill that Brittany Bruner-Ringo called 911 for an ambulance, but it was too late. In the days and weeks that followed, the virus would spread in the facility.

Bruner-Ringo stopped breathing on April 20, 2020, in the intensive care unit at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, according to her family. She was 32.

"I was just praying every day that Brittany would be able to tell her own story," said her sister Breanna Hurd.

Los Angeles criminal defense attorney Alan Eisner, who is not involved in the case, views the charges as unique because they deal with decisions made by managers of a senior care facility during the early days of the pandemic.

"This is a once-in-a-generation pandemic," Eisner said. "I don't want to disregard all the people who died. But that's a high bar prosecutors have to prove and show that the facility is responsible for the deaths of all the other patients and even the nurse."

Jody Moore, an attorney who represents seven clients who either became ill with COVID-19 or died while at Silverado, said that by early 2020 the federal government provided guidance to long-term-care facilities on how to safeguard elderly residents, including screening and testing policies.

"It doesn't make any sense to say loved ones can't come in, private caregivers can't come in, because their documentation says we are putting residents at significant risk by exposing them to whatever may come through the front door," Moore said. "What they allowed to come through the front door was somebody with dollars attached. And that's what's really egregious misconduct here."

Helena Apothaker received an email from the facility in the early days of the pandemic letting her know that she would not be able to visit her mother, Catherine. The message said the facility was going into lockdown for the safety of its elderly residents.

"Nobody was allowed in," Apothaker said in an interview with The Times. "They were going to keep our loved ones safe. That was their top priority. Well, not 30 days later, I guess they lost their top priority."

Her mother was in the beginning stages of Alzheimer's, but overall in good health, Apothaker said. After her mother tested positive for COVID-19, Apothaker placed her mother in hospice care, and she was finally allowed to visit in person.

"I was in the building with my mother for the week that she died," Apothaker said. "I can't imagine what it must have been like for everybody who had to watch their parents die through a window or watch their loved ones die over FaceTime."

Hearing news that the criminal charges were filed against Silverado Beverly Place filled Apothaker with a sense of justice, because it feels as though people have forgotten about the pandemic and the people who have died.

"But I remember my mother died," she said. "The only thing I had to hold on to was the idea that maybe one day I would get some justice."

Times staff writer Harriet Ryan contributed to this report.

BUSINESS

Did deregulation lead to SVB's collapse?

Trump-era rollback of Dodd-Frank played a role in Silicon Valley Bank's woes but wasn't the only culprit.

By Don Lee

Jeff Chiu Associated Press

SILICON VALLEY Bank didn't crater because of too many bad loans made to tech firms. Rather, it was a classic bank run caused by a perfect storm of events.

WASHINGTON — It was a scene straight out of the Great Depression: a major California bank locking its doors and pulling down the shades as a horde of panicky depositors demanded their money.

And hard on the heels of the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, New York state regulators shut down another midsize bank called Signature Bank.

Federal officials rushed to insist that there's no call for panic, but the news shook millions of people who entrust their modest means to banks.

So who's to blame? Is it time for ordinary Americans to start worrying?

Here is the best information available.

Just how safe are American banks?

According to government officials and many outside experts, U.S. banks in general are much stronger today than they were before the great financial crash in 2008.

Since then, lending practices overall have been considerably more prudent.

And the banking system has significantly boosted its capital buffers to cover possible losses. Banks have also improved their ability to convert assets to cash if they face a surge in demands for withdrawals.

So I don't need to worry about my bank accounts?

No worries unless you have more than $250,000 sitting in your account or have picked one of those rare banks not a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

In the case of Silicon Valley and Signature banks — which were FDIC members — authorities said they would make an exception and ensure depositors get all of their money, even amounts above $250,000. The action was aimed at quelling panic and more bank runs.

Silicon Valley had many depositors with much more than $250,000.

It's possible that the feds could raise the current deposit guarantee cap more broadly, as they did during the 2008 financial crash.

A lot of companies keep more than the FDIC insured limit in banks. So when it comes to your paycheck, it depends on how carefully your boss chose its bank. And how much attention your employer pays to what the bank is doing.

Among other problems, Silicon Valley Bank and Signature had significant exposure to crypto markets, which made them outliers in the banking world.

That said, because lenders with less than $250 billion in assets are exempt from more stringent stress tests and liquidity requirements, it's not clear how many banks might be vulnerable.

What's known is that the Federal Reserve's rapid interest rate hikes — the fastest in four decades — have left banks with unrealized securities losses totaling more than $600 billion as of the end of last year.

Still, the Fed's move over the weekend to provide liquidity support for banks holding safe assets like Treasury bonds should help to limit the spread. And major banks, which were the core of troubles in the 2008 crisis, "are likely to prove more robust this time around," said analysts at Capital Economics.

Did weakening bank regulations in 2018 set up Silicon Valley Bank for collapse?

Not entirely, but it didn't help.

In May 2018, then-President Trump signed into law provisions that rolled back key elements of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which was passed after banks cratered in 2008. Specifically, it changed the threshold for making regional institutions like Silicon Valley Bank face tougher regulatory scrutiny.

Under Dodd-Frank, banking companies with assets of $50 billion or more were subjected to the most stringent rules that included enhanced capital requirements and so-called stress tests to determine liquidity risks.

The 2018 law — passed with bipartisan support — raised the asset threshold to $250 billion. And as of the end of last year, Silicon Valley Bank had assets of about $209 billion.

"Certainly there would not have been the same kind of fallout and panic if the regulations had not been changed," said Josh Lipsky, an economics policy expert at the Atlantic Council. "But," he added, "that's only part of it."

So what happened to SVB?

Silicon Valley Bank didn't crater because it had too many bad loans made to tech firms. Rather, it was a classic bank run caused by a perfect storm of events.

Sure, the bank was overexposed to a struggling tech industry, but that was compounded by the fact that it had mostly large depositors, which is unusual for a community lender.

Until last spring when it began raising interest rates, the Fed's rock-bottom rates and easy-money policies, coupled with pandemic stimulus and surging stocks, left many investors and venture capitalists flush with cash.

They funded start-ups and other entrepreneurs, which in turn put their money in Silicon Valley Bank. But more than 90% of the bank's deposits were not covered by the $250,000 federal insurance deposit guarantee.

Silicon Valley Bank's assets, meanwhile, were largely in long-term securities, which had fallen sharply in market value thanks to the Fed's rapid rate hikes to fight inflation.

So when a burst of depositors initiated withdrawals on March 9, reacting in herd fashion a day after the bank announced it was raising capital, Silicon Valley Bank was caught short. It may have had enough assets, but the bank didn't have enough time as it incurred serious losses in the value of its long-maturity Treasury bonds and mortgage securities.

By close of business March 9, it was almost $1 billion short of cash to cover the withdrawals.

Shouldn't bank regulators have done something earlier?

Absolutely, says Lawrence J. White, an expert on bank management and regulations at New York University. "Bank regulators were asleep at the switch," he said.

The Fed had primary oversight of Silicon Valley Bank, but it being a California-chartered bank, state officials also had a role.

The heightened risks were plainly evident as soon as interest rates started to jump. Moreover, executives at other, much-smaller community banks said that even without the stricter requirements for too-big-to-fail financial institutions, examiners would normally raise concerns and seek to slow banks that experience very rapid growth.

The average balance of Silicon Valley Bank's deposits had more than doubled in two years to $186 billion in 2022. So making sure that it had enough short-term liquidity capability to meet withdrawal demands should have been a given.

"This is something regulators, knowing what the investments were like, should have been conscious of and should have said, 'Oh, there are potential problems here,' " White said.

How are regulators and others responding?

The sudden collapse of the nation's 16th-largest bank has prompted lawsuits and immediate calls from lawmakers and bank authorities for investigations.

"The events surrounding Silicon Valley Bank demand a thorough, transparent and swift review by the Federal Reserve," said Jerome H. Powell, chair of the Federal Reserve System.

It's clear that bank managers, led by Chief Executive Greg Becker, failed to hedge their bets.

They didn't sufficiently diversify their deposit base, and loaded up on long-maturing assets.

But that bank regulators failed to step in earlier has fueled speculation that Silicon Valley Bank was too close to bank authorities. Up until the day it was seized, Becker had been on the board of directors at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco.

What's more, Becker had personally pushed lawmakers to ease Dodd-Frank rules for banks like his, a lobbying effort that was ultimately successful.

Will the banking crisis push the economy into recession?

Most economists say no, at least not by itself.

The latest report on consumer prices shows the rate of inflation continuing to slow. Job growth, meanwhile, has held up very well.

Certainly one of the biggest threats is if there's a loss of confidence in the banking system, but so far the quick response by U.S. authorities seems to have averted outright panic.

And there's one silver lining in the latest bank crisis: The Fed is likely to pause its rate hike campaign next week, and may cut back on how much more it will do in the months ahead.

"To entertain a rate hike now in the midst of this crisis is a bridge too far," said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at Fwdbonds in New York. "It's time for them to sit, watch and wait."

MARKET ROUNDUP

Stocks rise after data show inflation easing

Associated Press

Stocks ended broadly higher on Wall Street on Tuesday, as some of the most breathtaking moves from a manic Monday reversed course.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 1.7% after a report showed inflation is still high but heading lower. Stocks of smaller and midsize banks recovered some of their Monday plunges caused by worries that customers could yank out all their cash. Treasury yields soared to trim their historic drops.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 1.1%, while the Nasdaq composite added 2.1%. Gains in technology stocks, banks and communications services companies powered much of the rally.

A week ago, Wall Street was expecting Tuesday's report on inflation to be the most important data of the week, if not month. The worry at the time was that inflation is staying stubbornly high, which could force the Federal Reserve to pick up the pace again on its interest rate increases.

Such hikes can drive down inflation by slowing the economy, but they raise the risk of a recession later on. They also hurt prices for stocks, bonds and all kinds of other investments.

Tuesday's report showed that inflation at the consumer level was 6% in February, versus a year earlier. That matched economists' expectations and was a slowdown from January's 6.4% inflation rate, but it's still way above the Fed's target.

In normal times, that could call for an increase in the size of rate increases. The trouble for the Fed is that it's also facing a banking system and economy that may already be cracking due to all of its rate increases from the last year, which came at the fastest pace in decades. The second- and third-largest bank failures in U.S. history have both come since Friday.

"The Fed is stuck between a rock and a hard place," said Brian Jacobsen, senior investment strategist at Allspring Global Investments.

"Inflation met expectations but is still uncomfortably hot. Financial stresses are intense. Prudence would dictate they pause, but couple it with a stern warning that if inflation trends don't improve that they might need to hike more."

He said the Fed also has other tools to use besides rate increases. Among them: The Fed could adjust the speed at which it's shrinking its massive trove of bond investments, an action that effectively tightens the screws on the financial system.

An easier Fed could give the banking system and economy more breathing room, but it could also give inflation more oxygen.

Traders rushed Monday to place some bets that the Fed could decide to keep rates steady at its next meeting, instead of accelerating to a hike of 0.50 percentage points as they thought a week ago.

After the inflation data, bets are largely falling on it sticking with an increase of 0.25 points later this month, according to data from CME Group.

"From there, something like this should give the Fed pause about how much tightening is already in the system and has just yet to show up, especially when the labor market and the inflation data is cooling," said Ross Mayfield, investment strategist at Baird. "Markets have been trying to gauge a Fed pivot since last June, it feels like, and gotten it wrong every time. This feels like an event that could actually push the Fed to pivot."

Stocks across the financial industry rose Tuesday to recover some of their steep earlier drops. First Republic Bank jumped 27% after plunging 67.5% over the prior three days. KeyCorp gained 6.9%, Zions Bancorp rose 4.5% and Charles Schwab climbed 9.2%.

All told, the S&P 500 rose 63.53 points to 3,919.29, ending a three-day losing streak. The Dow added 336.26 points to close at 32,155.40, and the Nasdaq gained 239.31 points to close at 11,428.15.

Some of the wildest action has been in the bond market, where the yield on the two-year Treasury plunged Monday by roughly half a percentage point.

The two-year yield climbed back to 4.21% from 4.02% late Monday, another huge move.

The 10-year yield jumped to 3.66% from 3.55%. It helps set rates for mortgages and other important loans.

European markets also rebounded after a broad retreat in Asia.

Major stock indexes

Index	Close	Daily change	Daily % change	YTD % change
Dow industrials	32,155.40	+336.26	+1.06	-2.99
S&P 500	3,920.56	+64.80	+1.68	+2.11
Nasdaq composite	11,428.15	+239.31	+2.14	+9.19
S&P 400	2,451.60	+45.00	+1.87	+0.87
Russell 2000	1,776.89	+32.59	+1.87	+0.89
EuroStoxx 50	4,174.30	+77.76	+1.90	+10.07
Nikkei (Japan)	27,222.04	-610.92	-2.19	+4.32
Hang Seng (Hong Kong)	19,247.96	-448.01	-2.27	-2.70

Associated Press

Meta will cut about 10,000 jobs, close 5,000 openings

By Kurt Wagner

Meta Platforms plans to lay off about 10,000 employees and close about 5,000 open roles in its second major round of job cuts in the last six months.

Facebook's parent company is embarking on a "year of efficiency" to improve its financial performance and achieve longer-term goals.

As part of those efforts, Meta is flattening the organization, canceling lower-priority projects and slowing hiring, Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg said in a statement Tuesday.

The world's largest social networking company in November laid off 11,000 people, or 13% of its staff.

Meta lowered its outlook for 2023 expenses to a range of $86 billion to $92 billion, accounting for the job reductions and other cost-cutting measures.

That's down from $89 billion to $95 billion previously, according to a company filing, and includes $3 billion to $5 billion in restructuring costs, including severance.

Meta employees had been bracing for more layoffs in recent weeks.

Zuckerberg has been outspoken about the need to better prioritize projects and investments and has hinted at additional job cuts. Meta began its flattening process earlier this year, eliminating some middle managers and asking others to return to individual contributor roles instead of overseeing other employees.

Even so, Zuckerberg said that "this update may still feel surprising." Shares gained 7.3% to $194.02 at the close in New York, the highest price in more than eight months.

The company expects to announce restructurings and layoffs in tech groups in late April, and business groups in late May, according to the statement. With less hiring overall, Zuckerberg said he's also reducing the size of the recruiting team.

The company, which also owns Instagram and WhatsApp, has seen a slowdown in advertising revenue, leading to its first-ever annual sales decline in 2022. Zuckerberg has shifted Meta's focus and investment in the last year to virtual reality technology and the so-called metaverse, which he envisions as the next major computing platform.

Meta's employee ranks expanded dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic as demand for the company's digital services increased and Zuckerberg leaned into the moment.

The social media giant's head count grew 30% in 2020, the first year of the pandemic, and then 23% in 2021. By the time Meta starting eliminating jobs in November, the company had more than 87,000 employees.

As part of its efficiency plan, Meta is focusing on returning to a "more optimal ratio of engineers to other roles," Zuckerberg said.

The company will invest in tools, such as those in artificial intelligence to help engineers write code faster, to make it "most effective over many years, not just this year."

To flatten the organization, Meta will remove multiple layers of management and will ask many managers to be contributors too. In general, the company doesn't want its managers to have more than 10 direct reports, but today many have only a few, Zuckerberg said.

Meta's $3-billion operating-expense reduction for 2023 "is likely aimed at aligning expenses to top-line growth," Bloomberg Intelligence's Mandeep Singh and Damian Reimertz wrote. "We believe a major focus of this second round of layoffs will be in R&D."

During the pandemic, Facebook was one of the first tech companies to offer all of its employees the ability to work from home.

But Zuckerberg is now encouraging his staff to "find more opportunities to work with your colleagues in person." Other tech companies including Twitter, Apple, and Amazon.com have also begun calling employees back to the office at least a few days a week, walking back earlier policies that were more lenient.

As the Menlo Park, Calif.-based company pares staff, workers have described heightened anxiety and low morale among colleagues.

But Zuckerberg's focus on efficiency has been well received by Wall Street. Meta's stock has gained nearly 58% since the beginning of the year.

Wagner writes for Bloomberg.

Drug use, crime drive away Metro riders

[**Metro,** from A1]
— as if she encountered such scenes all the time.

Drug use is rampant in the Metro system. Since January, 22 people have died on Metro buses and trains — more people than all of 2022 — mostly from suspected overdoses. Serious crimes, including robbery, rape and aggravated assault, soared 24% last year compared with the previous year.

"Horror." That's how one train operator recently described the scenes he sees daily. He declined to use his name because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

Earlier that day, as he drove the Red Line subway, he saw a man masturbating in his seat and several people whom he refers to as "sleepers," people who get high and nod off on the train.

"We don't even see any businesspeople anymore. We don't see anybody going to Universal. It's just people who have no other choice [than] to ride the system, homeless people and drug users."

Commuters have abandoned large swaths of the Metro train system. Even before the pandemic, ridership in the region was never as high as other big-city rail systems. For January, ridership on the Gold Line was 30% of the pre-pandemic levels, and the Red Line was at 56%. The new $2.1-billion Crenshaw Line that officials tout as a bright spot with little crime had fewer than 2,100 average weekday boardings that month.

Few stations compare with MacArthur Park/Westlake. The station sits next to an open-air drug market that's existed in this dense immigrant neighborhood for decades. About 22,000 people board the trains here daily.

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority reported that between November and January there were 26 medical emergencies at the station, the majority of them suspected drug overdoses. Last year, there were six deaths and one shooting, nearly all related to suspected drug activity. Earlier this year, a 28-year-old man was fatally stabbed in a breezeway of the station.

Maintenance crews are often called out for repairs at the station, and when they return to their vehicle they often find it has been burglarized. Gangs control the area and police say many of the informal vendors on the sidewalks are part of the larger drug economy, wittingly or not. Some are forced to pay taxes to the gang, others sell stolen property.

The transit agency's head of security has said she will be asking the 13-member board — that includes Mayor Karen Bass and the county supervisors — to expand the agency's force of nearly 200 in-house transit officers, some of whom are armed and enforce fare evasion and code of conduct violations. And the board will soon decide whether to continue contracts with the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Long Beach Police Department, or come up with another way to secure the system.

Some board members and social justice advocates have argued for less policing on the system, saying that racial profiling targets many passengers.

"What will harassment and jailing people who use drugs do to address drug use rates?" said Alison Vu, a spokesperson for Alliance for Community Transit-L.A., a social justice advocacy coalition that wants the agency to eliminate contracts with law enforcement. "We've poured so much money into policing, without any measurable impact on care or safety for transit riders."

In response to such concerns, transit officials committed $122 million over the last year trying to make the system — composed of 105 rail stations and more than 12,000 bus stops — feel safer by placing 300 unarmed "ambassadors" to report crimes and help passengers. It's part of what officials like to tout as a "multilayered" approach to improving the system. But it has become emptier and more dangerous over recent years, even as billions have been sunk into expansion of the rail lines.

"I do think there's something about the culture of the riding public, that if they know there's someone who is empowered to report [illegal activity] that may be a deterrent to the activity itself," said Metro Chief Executive Stephanie Wiggins.

Wiggins touted the rollout of the ambassador program to the news media on March 6. Followed by a phalanx of ambassadors, she boarded a Gold Line train from downtown Union Station to Heritage Square in Montecito Heights to show how what she and others call the "eyes and ears" of the system will work.

As Wiggins talked to reporters, a man in the next car was packing marijuana into a cigar wrapper. The ambassadors didn't discourage the man as he threw tobacco on the floor to make room for the weed.

Melissa Saenz, one of several newly minted ambassadors on the train, leaned over to tell a reporter that in instances such as this she would "report it" to law enforcement. "We are here to make a change."

But even law enforcement said it can do only so much.

During the final three months of last year, LAPD arrested 49 people on the Red Line on suspicion of drug-related offenses. As of mid-February, only one of those arrests resulted in a criminal filing, said LAPD Deputy Chief Donald Graham, who oversees the department's Transit Bureau.

Many drug possession charges in California are misdemeanors or are considered lower-level offenses. And as such, the cases are often a low priority. Evidence often sits in a crime lab for months.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported deaths linked to fentanyl rose from 109 in 2016 to 1,504 in 2021, amounting to a 1,280% increase. First responders now often carry Narcan, an opiate reversal, and they need it on the Metro.

The deaths from fentanyl and fentanyl-laced methamphetamine occur across the system. There were nine confirmed overdoses at rail stations last year, all men. But those figures will probably rise as the coroner's office closes more cases.

There were Oscar Velasquez, 23, who died at the downtown Santa Monica station; Trivonne Vonner, 35, found at the Firestone station in an unincorporated area of South Los Angeles; and Ervin Siles Gutierrez, pronounced dead at the Vermont/Santa Monica station in East Hollywood.

"There's so many 'sleepers,' " the train driver said. "Nobody notices that the guy quit breathing until they're blue. And then by that time, it's too late."

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid drug that is 50 times more potent than heroin — and cheap. A single dose can be bought for about $5. But it's extremely addictive, in part because of the withdrawal it provokes — jitters, diarrhea, extreme anxiousness and nausea.

"It's like the worst flu you've ever had in your entire life. And it just gets worse over time," said Susan Partovi, a doctor who treats users on skid row. "That has become most of the people's main motivation — to continue opiate use is to avoid withdrawal symptoms."

She said overdose prevention sites, where people who are addicted could ingest drugs safely and without shame, could prevent such public nuisances as people doing drugs in elevators or on trains.

Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed legislation last year to begin a pilot program of these consumption sites in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland. In his veto message, he said he was open to discussion on limited sites, but he said without a strong plan the legislation could have induced a "world of unintended consequences."

The "sleepers" were at Union Station one recent weekday afternoon as a petite woman, who spoke little English, looked for the train to the Expo Line.

She walked into a train car that was empty but for three passed-out passengers. She looked at them and walked out. Unsure what to do next, she stood looking confused on the platform. An ambassador came up to ask if she needed help.

"Expo," she said.

She was on the right train, he said. But she shook her head. She didn't want to return to the cars. So he walked her into another car and stayed with her. The doors closed.

People waited for hours to board the train when it opened in 1993. The MacArthur Park/Westlake station was the original western terminus of Los Angeles' first subway, with a plaza that looks out to the park.

On a recent Tuesday afternoon, used needles and human feces littered the station's parking lot. Just around the corner near Alvarado Street, a man smoked from a glass pipe as a steady stream of people walked by.

Drug users and homeless people hang around the edges of the plaza and have breached locked areas in the station, creating a danger for riders and staff.

"It's the most challenging [station] relative to drug use," said Conan Cheung, Metro head of operations. "People are loitering there on the plaza and it is spilling into the ancillary areas, which makes it even more of an emergency."

The smaller entrance is now closed off by fencing, as are large swaths inside the battered station. Transit officials recently beefed up security and the presence of ambassadors there. But they have also been trying to design away the problem by reducing the open floor space, pressure-washing floors and piping in classical music to keep people from loitering. Metro is looking at replacing the wide benches on the platform, regulating vendors and blocking off parts of the plaza.

Metro board member and Supervisor Hilda Solis asked the agency to consider another approach, and come up with a plan that will make the station and plaza more inviting to the community at large. She's asked the agency to look at "care-centered strategies" including a vending program, health and crisis support services, cultural programming, public art, bathrooms and shade structures.

LAPD foot patrols were inside and outside the MacArthur Park/Westlake station when a Times reporter and photographer visited on a recent Tuesday.

"Most people come here to buy drugs and then they do them on the train," said Jerry Settlemire, who emerged from the platform with his wife, Michelle.

But the changes barely registered with the couple. The two said they had recently been released from the county jail and came to cop "fetty," as fentanyl is known on the streets.

After talking for a few moments, a jittery Michelle Settlemire began looking around.

"I'm ready to get high," she said.

They walked away from the station to buy drugs.

Before Morales boarded the train to smoke his drugs, he was outside the station plaza in a brisk breeze as people whizzed by. Women held their children's hands. Others talked on phones. Then there were those with drawn faces who looked as though they hadn't slept in days. Many were thin and some, like Morales, had bloody marks on their faces or limbs. He didn't sleep the day before but seemed happy to talk.

"The dealers recognize me and I recognize them," Morales said.

He had his fetty in his pocket and was looking for other smokers to hang out with on the train, where there was no wind. He took the elevator down to the platform. Many drug users like the station elevators because some can be locked, giving them time to smoke in there.

Morales' face lighted up when he found a marijuana bud on the elevator floor, put it in his pocket for later, and jumped on the train.

When he got off at the same station just 20 minutes later, he could barely stand. The puffy yellow jacket he had worn earlier fell to the floor along with a plastic baggie with his drugs. He leaned toward the edge of the platform, edging dangerously close to the tracks.

A.J. Jackson, 35, guided Morales back from the precipice. He had just smoked some fentanyl himself, using the subterranean station like Morales used the train, as refuge from wind that might blow a precious grain of dope away.

Addicts converge in these spaces, in part because they know people like them will be there.

"We all have something in common," Jackson said. "There's a camaraderie, everyone has a story. We look out for each other."

He had worked as a security guard and had a home, and was now living on the streets. He showed a picture of him hiking with his 5-year-old daughter, but he wasn't ready to quit drugs.

A few Los Angeles police officers descended onto the platform. One flashed a light on Jackson's backpack, telling him he couldn't stay here if he wasn't riding the train.

He got up to leave and Morales staggered behind him.

A Metro worker cleaning the station said she sees this all the time. She was recently assaulted when taking the subway from Union Station. A woman pulled her off the seat by her hair.

"I don't feel sorry for them," she said.

ALLEN J. SCHABEN Los Angeles Times

LAPD OFFICERS E. Rosales, right, and D. Castro tell a Metro rider to exit the train after a female rider complained that she was being harassed on the Red Line at the Hollywood/Highland station in June 2020.

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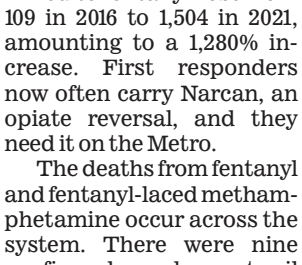
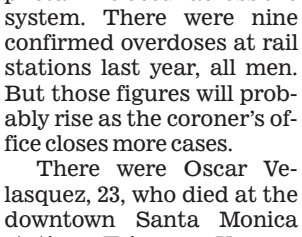
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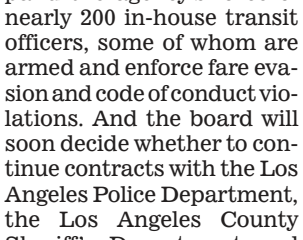
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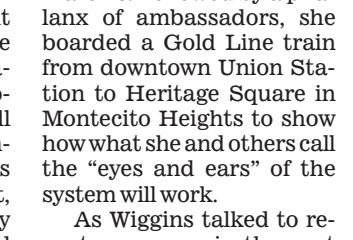

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EDITORIAL

JUSTIN SULLIVAN Getty Images

THE SALINAS RIVER overflows its banks on Jan. 13.

Restore floodplains to save stormwater

A managed retreat would also protect lives and property in California

The southern Sierra Nevada is covered with the deepest snowpack in recorded history, and the rest of the range is not far behind. When all that snow melts, where will it go?

You can read the answer in the landscape of the Central Valley. To the eye it is nearly flat, covered by layers of gravel, silt and clay washed from the mountains over the eons by rain and melting snow. Amid the flatness are gradual slopes down to the valley's center, where the Sacramento River creates a watery vein in the north and the San Joaquin River does the same in the middle. Once — before the late 19th century, when newcomers began to drain the land and channel the water from wetlands into farm fields — the southern part of the valley held the largest freshwater lake, by surface area, west of the Mississippi.

Many smaller California valleys likewise feature rivers, including the Salinas, that are often nearly dry but flood their banks in wet years like this one because of torrential rain rather than snowmelt.

That's where the water goes: to the valley floors, swelling the rivers in flood years until they overflow their banks, imperiling communities like Pajaro and the people in them.

During the Great Flood of 1861-62, water covered the entire Central Valley. It would have been possible to sail from what was not yet Bakersfield, north past the flooded Capitol in Sacramento, almost to where Redding now sits.

In drier times, though, those same flat floodplains looked especially attractive to farmers and builders, so now the valley floors are cultivated and developed. But in wet years like this one, all that rain and melted snow still need a place to go, and they pay no attention to human development. They still seek the lowest ground and will find it. A quick look at a satellite photo of the snow-covered Sierra makes it plain: No number of dams can hold all that water back, no number of reservoirs can lock it up.

The solution is shockingly simple, relatively cheap — compared with the cost of cataclysmic floods — and surprisingly non-controversial. We just haven't yet done it on the scale that's needed.

California needs to restore its floodplains. Not the whole valley floors, and not as they were in the pre-development era. But it needs to have many more acres of land reserved for floodwater.

Restoring floodplains requires setting aside low-lying inland areas for water to accumulate away from homes and critical infrastructure. It's as easy as moving levees. Instead of building them ever taller, to hustle rushing water out to sea, levees set back from riverbanks give the water a place to slow down, settle and seep into the ground, safely away from human habitation and commercial investment.

There are multiple benefits. The first is, of course, protecting life and property, because floodwaters are given a place other than city streets to gather. Beyond that, water that settles over floodplains percolates into the soil and, where the geology permits, recharges groundwater that has been dangerously depleted by agricultural over-pumping.

And restoring floodplains restores seasonal wetlands, which is good for the entire natural web that holds California together — including native plants that are less likely to burn during fire season than invasive species, fish that regain spawning habitat, migratory birds that find nesting areas, mammals that can once again migrate across the valley.

In dry seasons, restored floodplains can be wildlife preserves. But they also can be soccer fields, golf courses, even farm fields for annual crops like tomatoes or melons. Just not homes or perennial crops such as almonds.

Some homes are already standing where floodwaters are naturally prone to gather, and that poses a quandary. Do we protect them from floodwater at any cost, or abandon them to it? The questions are the same as with homes destroyed by wildfire, and whether it is society's duty to protect people who choose to rebuild in an area at risk from fire, flood or other predictable disasters. There is no consensus. As with coastal neighborhoods threatened by rising sea level, in some cases the prudent and cost-effective move will be a managed retreat from riverbeds that could flood, even if they are dry most years.

All that's missing in restoring floodplains is the will, and enough money to buy land, usually farmland that has become too costly to keep under cultivation. Gov. Gavin Newsom is touting his decision to use some of this year's overabundant rain to recharge groundwater. But he also cut most floodplain restoration funding from his proposed budget for the third straight year.

In years like this one, in which the state seems to have more water than money, a floodplain restoration advocate's thoughts may turn to the ballot. A well-crafted bond measure could give a serious push to necessary restoration efforts. Even though flooding threatens the state today, a bond might easily land on the ballot in a parched year when atmospheric rivers, historic snowpacks and submerged highways are long forgotten. But whether it's a budget allocation or a bond, let's try to remember: There will be even wetter winters, and restored floodplains can protect homes and capture water for use in bone-dry summers.

'Blame Mexico' is no fix for fentanyl crisis

Who caused the recent violence? Well, which nation buys the drugs and sells the guns?

LZ GRANDERSON

Ken Salazar, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, met with the Los Angeles Times for more than an hour while visiting California in November. He was eager to talk up the celebrations surrounding the U.S.-Mexico diplomacy bicentennial. We were eager to talk about the border. The pas de deux featured a lot of platitudes, a couple of tense moments, and a number I can't shake: 13,000.

That was the estimate Salazar gave for the number of Mexicans who were studying at our universities at the time. Many of us were surprised to hear it was so low. We've been friends with Mexico for 200 years, and *that's* all our diplomacy could muster? By comparison, our geopolitical adversary China had north of 300,000 on our campuses.

The reason for the gap between the two nations is obvious: Chinese students bring in an estimated $15 billion to the economy each year. Mexico's economy is robust — the 15th largest in the world — but China is second only to the U.S. Apparently that number matters more than those 200 years.

And therein lies the rub.

Instead of sending 300,000 college students to the U.S. like China does, Mexico is being trampled by those two giants: China funnels fentanyl through Mexico to the U.S. market, and the U.S. exports guns to Mexico so the cartels can protect their product. It's an ugly triangle of illicit trade, and Mexico gets the worse end of every deal.

And yet when drugs and guns claim lives on both sides of the U.S.' southern border, Mexico is chastised for not doing more. More what exactly? President Andrés Manuel López Obrador had his own critique for Americans this month: "Why don't you take care of your young people? Why don't you take care of the serious problem of social decay? Why don't [you] temper the constant increase in drug consumption?"

Those remarks came after Mexican authorities rescued the two Americans who were kidnapped by members of a drug cartel in Tamaulipas state this month. Two others were killed.

Does López Obrador sound a bit harsh there?

He raises reasonable questions. American politicians don't have great answers to offer, though.

Instead, after the kidnappings, calls for U.S. military intervention have grown in some conservative circles, because there are those who rarely see a problem that an endless war couldn't exacerbate. This on the heels of 21 attorneys general calling for President Biden to designate the cartels as terrorist organizations — sometimes a useful tool to cut off financing, but also potentially a dangerous pretext for escalation and military intervention.

And can you imagine if the U.S. were to send troops into Mexico? They would face a vast arsenal of weapons made in America.

That's not Mexico's fault. The nation has no equivalent to the 2nd Amendment. Roughly 50 gun permits are issued per year. There's only one store in all of Mexico where it is legal to buy a gun, and it is controlled by the military. Legal gun sales in Mexico are not the problem.

However it is estimated that over 200,000 guns are trafficked into Mexico from the U.S. each year. The U.S. gun industry has been arming Mexican drug cartels for as long as there have been Mexican drug cartels.

Up to 90% of guns used in crimes in Mexico and traced turn out to have originated in the U.S., mostly Arizona and Texas. Gun proliferation has made mass shootings common at home — last year was the deadliest yet — and now our pastime has been exported to Mexico.

The U.S. is the major customer keeping Mexican cartels in business. We're the major supplier of the guns that make them so deadly. This is the relationship we have created with Mexico.

It's a sad reality that was only driven home by the ambassador's numbers from our conversation in November: 300,000 students from China, 13,000 from Mexico.

Chinese students benefit from the U.S. educational system because they're paying top dollar. Meanwhile our neighbors, with whom the U.S. is so proud to have had diplomatic relations for 200 years, are barely represented in an educational exchange that could benefit both sides of the border.

This dynamic exposes the inherent flaw in our approach to foreign policy. We expect other nations to be the ideological purists we lack the fortitude to be. And every now and then a world leader reminds us of our hypocrisy.

Sometimes it comes from an enemy like Russian President Vladimir Putin, who recently called out America's own social ills after critiques from Biden.

Sometimes it's a friend like López Obrador.

We supply most of the world's guns. We have long been the most prolific drug users in the world. And what do we do? Blame one of our oldest friends for the trouble we've caused.

LETTERS

ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

PEDESTRIANS pass a Silicon Valley Bank branch on Broadway in Santa Monica on Monday.

There oughta be a law (there was)

Re "Feds reassure failed lender's clients," March 13

Your coverage of the Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank failures has been thorough, but some articles have omitted one very relevant fact.

After the banking failures of 2008, Congress enacted the Dodd-Frank law, which among other things required banks with assets over $50 billion to meet certain stress tests, including retaining sufficient liquidity to meet likely depositor demands. The Trump administration watered that down, raising the threshold to $250 billion.

That let both Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank escape the tougher liquidity requirements and forced the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. to take them over. Thanks again, former President Trump.

KEN GOLDMAN
Beverly Hills

There is a little-known fact about the recent bank failures.

The FDIC has only $128 billion, a tiny fraction of the funds needed to cover the estimated $10 trillion in insured bank accounts. If just a few mid-sized banks failed, the FDIC itself would be insolvent.

This would require the Federal Reserve to step in and loan these banks enough to cover customers' accounts, as it just did for Silicon Valley Bank. Such intervention on a large scale would further fuel inflation, forcing the Fed to continue raising interest rates.

The safest course for many businesses and private citizens is to park their cash in short-term government bonds.

HAL GOLDBERG
Laguna Woods

::

On Monday, your front page reported that billionaires and others with their money in Silicon Valley Bank would get a free-lunch bailout.

The back page had an article on "food insecurity" and poor kids cut off from government lunch programs. My advice to poor kids: Hire the same lobbyists the banks use, and you'll never go hungry again.

Or maybe we should enforce "bailout insecurity" on billionaires.

ERIC ALTER
Woodland Hills

Catholic women who press on

Re "10 years of Francis, the most California of popes," March 12

Rosa Manriquez, who was quoted extensively in your article on Pope Francis' 10 years in power, is a member of the Immaculate Heart Community, of which I am also a member. Bishop Jane Via, also quoted, is a former member.

They both exemplify the path that women have taken when denied participation in the call to Holy Orders.

Women being denied their rights is a global issue, not just a Catholic one. Witness the women who have taken to the streets to assert their rights in the face of male oppression and domination in the political arena.

Let us hope that the voices of women will be heard in the Catholic Church and in the larger global community so that someday, justice will prevail and women will no longer be subject to the power and authority of men standing in their way.

Creative women will look for alternative ways to exercise their calls to work for a more just and peaceful world — with or without men alongside them.

LENORE NAVARRO DOWLING
Los Angeles

::

Nothing exemplifies Francis' papacy more than his answer to a question about gay men in the clergy: "Who am I to judge?"

It was a very down-to-earth, meek answer. However, according to Lumen Gentium, a document of the Second Vatican Council, which Pope Francis advocates, "The Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered."

As such, this pope is empowered and expected use his authority to judge, one way or another, and to lead his flock with clear guidance.

It's no wonder that the church, both the hierarchy and the laity, has now been hopelessly and needlessly confused and divided.

KEE KIM
La Habra

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OP-ED

Are Harris and Warren fighting?

Is a misunderstanding between the senator and vice president being exploited?

ROBIN ABCARIAN

DAVID J. PHILLIP Associated Press

AT A DEBATE venue during the Democratic presidential primaries in 2019, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, left, and then-Sen. Kamala Harris react to the audience.

There are so many ways to delegitimize a woman in politics: Attack her for the sound of her laughter, for shedding a tear on the campaign trail, for her choice of clothing, for being cranky with her staff or eating her salad with a comb.

But no tactic is more tiresome than trying to exploit a rift between two major political figures who happen to be women.

In January, Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts was asked during a Boston Public Radio interview whether President Biden should keep Vice President Kamala Harris as his running mate in 2024. Apparently not wanting to step on the president's toes, Warren politely dodged the question.

"I really want to defer to what makes Biden comfortable on his team," she said. "I've known Kamala for a long time. I like Kamala. I knew her back when she was an attorney general and I was still teaching and we worked on the housing crisis together, so we go way back. But they need — they have to be a team, and my sense is they are."

Seems like a reasonable if somewhat bumbling response from one politician trying to avoid being put on the spot by predicting what another politician will do.

According to subsequent news reports, however, Warren's wishy-washy words ticked off Harris, her aides and some top Democrats. "Pretty insulting," said someone in Harris' circle who was quoted anonymously by CNN.

In their minds, I suppose, Warren should have responded with a full-throated endorsement championing Harris' indispensability to Biden, to the future of the Democratic Party and to America.

But, of course, no vice president is indispensable. Lack of indispensability is practically a requirement for the role. The job of the vice president is to stay alive, and to assume the presidency if something terrible befalls her boss. That's it. Which is why FDR's vice president, John Nance Garner, famously quipped that the office "is not worth a bucket of warm piss."

We know that for the most part, vice presidential candidates do very little to sway voters. (The exception, say some researchers, is that they can provide a slight home-state advantage.) And we also know that no presidential candidate picks a veep based on what a fantastic successor they believe he or she will be.

Sarah Palin and Mike Pence were sops to the conservative Christian wing of the GOP, which deemed John McCain in 2008 and Donald Trump in 2016 insufficiently pious. Biden in 2008 was a sop to those who thought Barack Obama lacked foreign affairs experience. The bland Tim Kaine was a sop in 2016 to the voters whose heads would have exploded if Hillary Clinton had chosen a person of color or another woman. Dick Cheney, George W. Bush's running mate in 2000, was a sop to the armies of Sauron — kidding! (Sort of.)

Putting Harris on the 2020 Democratic ticket was the fulfillment of Biden's campaign promise that he would choose a woman as his running mate. That she was relatively youthful and a woman of color was a bonus. Her age may have helped neutralize concerns about Biden's advanced age.

Is there any reason to think that Biden, already in the ageist crosshairs, would dump Harris in 2024?

Of course not. He can't. He shouldn't. He won't.

Warren surely knew that.

Two days after her Boston Public Radio faux pas, Warren clarified her remarks in a statement to the station: "I fully support the President's and Vice President's re-election together, and never intended to imply otherwise. They're a terrific team with a strong record of delivering for working families."

Warren, reported CNN, tried to call Harris twice to apologize, but was rerouted to Harris' chief of staff, Lorraine Voles, who returned her call. Some conservative news outlets — the New York Post, the Washington Times and Fox News — have portrayed this as a consequential rift between former rivals (both women ran for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2019; both aspired to be Biden's running mate).

Maybe in a normal political environment, no one would really care. But Warren's failure to avidly embrace Harris has coincided with a spate of Democratic fretting about 2024. Could Harris, who is the object of intense vilification and whose approval ratings are wan, be a drag on the 2024 ticket?

"Multiple Democratic leaders contend that if people don't start feeling more positive about the next person in the line of succession," CNN reported on Sunday, "they might turn away from the ticket entirely."

It's hard to imagine a world where people would sit out an election or vote for a Ron DeSantis or a Donald Trump instead of a Joe Biden because they find Kamala Harris' laugh grating.

But political journalism abhors a vacuum, and speculation about the fate of any vice president occurs around this time in every four-year cycle. So, naturally, there has been a spate of negative stories about Harris of late — saying that Democrats are disappointed in her, that she has done nothing to distinguish herself as vice president, that she has not, as the New York Times put it last month, "risen to the challenge of proving herself as a future leader of the party, much less the country."

To borrow a favorite Biden phrase, that's a bunch of malarkey.

By definition, vice presidents are not in a position to demonstrate their leadership skills, lest they be accused of undermining the boss. Yes, Harris' approval ratings are low, but I attribute this to the country's persistent racism and sexism, not to mention the much higher expectations for Harris than would ever be placed on the shoulders of a man in her position.

Biden should announce that he's running for reelection, and that Harris will be his running mate. Then Democrats can get to work explaining why they deserve a second term instead of picking at Harris.

And to finish off a sexist story that deserved no oxygen in the first place, Harris should stop ignoring Warren and accept her apology. It's what a leader would do.

@AbcarianLAT

The rising risk of rain-on-snow floods

California is seeing what might become a more common phenomenon

By Keith Musselman

California's latest atmospheric rivers are sending rainfall higher into the mountains and onto the state's crucial snowpack. The rain alone is a problem for low-lying areas already dealing with destructive flooding, but the prospect of rain on the deep mountain snow has triggered widespread flood warnings.

When rain falls on snow, it creates complex flood risks that are hard to forecast. Those risks are also rising with climate change.

For much of the United States, storms with heavy rainfall can coincide with seasonal snow cover. When that happens, the resulting runoff of water can be much greater than what is produced from rain or snowmelt alone. The combination has resulted in some of the nation's most destructive and costly floods, including the 1996 Midwest floods and the 2017 flood that damaged California's Oroville Dam.

But rainfall itself has limited energy to melt snow. Rather, it is the warm temperatures, strong winds and high humidity — which can transport substantial energy in the form of latent and sensible heat — that predominantly drive snowmelt during rain-on-snow events.

Snowpack has air spaces that water can move through. As the rain falls, the water can travel relatively rapidly through the snowpack's layers to reach the underlying soil. How streams respond to that runoff depends on how much water is already flowing and how saturated the soil is.

When the soil isn't yet saturated, it can dampen or delay a flood response by soaking up rain and melting snow. But when the ground is saturated, snowmelt combined with rainfall can lead to fast and devastating flooding.

BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

CARS ARE BURIED at a used-car lot as rain falls and snow melts in an area of the San Bernardino Mountains.

To predict whether a flood will occur requires knowledge of weather and hydrological conditions. It requires knowing the soil moisture and snowpack conditions before the storm, the elevation at which rain transitions to snow, the rainfall rate, the wind speed, air temperature and humidity, and estimates of how those factors contribute to snowmelt. Additionally, each factor varies in time and in complex ways during a storm, especially across a mountainous landscape.

That's why so little is known about rain-on-snow floods, considered compound extreme events, despite the extensive damage they can cause.

In the California mountains right now, it's the middle elevations — where either substantial rainfall or snowfall can occur — that face the most severe effects. The lower elevations have primarily seen rainfall rather than snow, so there is less snowpack to melt. And at the highest elevations, colder temperatures ensure the deep snowpack continues to accumulate and rainfall is less likely.

If all storms were created equal, there would be well-defined rain zones and snow zones, and the rain-on-snow flood risk would be low. But instead, not only does the snow zone elevation vary during an event, but it also varies substantially from one storm to the next.

The most destructive rain-on-snow events occur when rivers are already running high and soils are saturated, as is happening in California after a series of warm atmospheric rivers. The order in which these storms occur is especially important for assessing flood risk because these events are caused in part by rapid shifts between cold periods of snow accumulation followed by warm rainfall.

How rain-on-snow flood risk will change as the planet warms is still not well understood. Will increases in precipitation extremes and winter rainfall increase rain-on-snow occurrence and the flood risk? Or will less snow cover and larger soil-moisture deficits reduce rain-on-snow flood risk in a warmer climate?

A few points are becoming clearer. In a warming climate, there will be less risk of precipitation falling on snow in the lower elevations as the snowpack declines, particularly in warmer regions such as the Pacific Northwest. But at higher elevations, there may be more frequent rain-on-snow events. Increased flood risk comes from the rain-snow transition zone expanding higher in elevation to include alpine areas that historically received snowfall.

Flood control and reservoir management systems in these mountainous regions will have to consider these shifts — in addition to changes in rainfall intensity and storm sequencing — to fully understand and prepare for future local flood risks.

As the planet warms, the rain-on-snow effect is only one of many costly risks local communities will need to account for. This week, California is seeing what might become a more common phenomenon as a result of climate change.

Keith Musselman is an assistant professor in geography, mountain hydrology and climate change at the University of Colorado Boulder. This article was produced in partnership with The Conversation.

The Pajaro flood — not just a 'natural' disaster

Undocumented migrants in California — a vulnerable group to begin with — are invisible when it comes to disaster aid.

By Michael Méndez and Manuel Pastor

In the last few years, California has experienced extreme wildfires, heat waves and the ever-present COVID-19 pandemic. What has become abundantly clear, particularly from the ravages of the pandemic on low-income communities of color, is that disaster risk is not an equal-opportunity affair.

The latest evidence of this came this past weekend as the Pajaro River levee failed and flooded a small town populated mainly by migrant workers and their families. In an eerie coincidence, the levee failure occurred on March 12, 95 years to the day the St. Francis Dam catastrophically failed because of a defective foundation and other design flaws.

The dam collapse triggered a massive flood in Los Angeles and Ventura counties that claimed the lives of nearly 500 people, many of them undocumented migrant farmworkers. It represents the second-greatest loss of life in California's history, after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, and is still considered one of the worst civil engineering disasters in U.S. history.

Just as with the St. Francis Dam, the failure of the Pajaro levee was not totally a "natural" disaster. For decades, government officials have known that the levee was vulnerable yet never prioritized repairs largely because their cost-benefit analysis didn't value the losses of a low-income town. As Stu Townsley of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers told The Times over the weekend: "You get basically Bay Area construction costs but the value of property isn't all that high." A reassessment, taking equity into account, has been made, but obviously too late to prevent catastrophe.

The task now is not just to hold officials accountable for the poor decisions in planning that allowed for the levee breach but to ensure that relief and recovery is delivered equitably.

The relief effort during the aftermath of the St. Francis Dam failure provides an instructive lesson in getting it wrong. The Red Cross, for example, largely refused to provide treatment to Mexican flood victims; local government officials instead enlisted the assistance of La Cruz Azul de San Fernando, a local charity that provided Latino victims mutual aid in racially segregated shelters and offered interpreter-coordinated services. The city of Los Angeles, the operator of the St. Francis Dam, was later accused of providing Latino farmworkers with lower payouts to cover property loss and for funeral expenses.

This is not just some long-ago history. In our research on wildfires in Ventura, Santa Barbara and Sonoma counties from 2017 and 2020, we found that undocumented migrants were rendered invisible by cultural norms regarding who is deemed a worthy disaster victim. In interviews with victims and analysis of government data, a pattern appeared: Resources were directed toward wealthier individuals, leaving local immigrant rights groups to provide essential services such as language access to emergency information in Spanish and Indigenous dialects, labor protections for farmworkers threatened by heavy smoke, and establishing a disaster-relief fund for those ineligible for federal aid.

Given their marginalized social status, undocumented migrants are particularly vulnerable to disasters and require special consideration in disaster planning and response. They are adversely affected by racial discrimination, economic exploitation and hardship, fear of deportation and communication difficulties. According to a 2019 state auditor's report, emergency officials routinely overlook the state's most vulnerable populations as they make preparations for foreseeable wildfires, floods and other disasters.

Stronger protections are needed. For example, improved language access for emergency information; inclusive disaster and climate adaptation planning programs; disaster-planning funding for community-based migrant organizations; better occupational health and safety provisions; a permanent statewide disaster relief fund for undocumented immigrants to cover unemployment and medical costs, housing and property replacement, and hazard pay for those who work under dangerous conditions during a disaster.

Wildfires, heat waves, floods and pandemics do not discriminate. Nor are these disasters unanticipated, isolated phenomena. Disaster risk and disaster interventions are ultimately political in nature. As California experiences a rapid increase in the number and severity of challenges associated with our changing climate, we must embrace and engage all Californians, including those who may lack legal status, in preparing for a sustainable future. Addressing the crisis in Pajaro with an equitable and inclusive approach offers us the opportunity to get it right for current residents and for future generations.

Michael Méndez is an Andrew Carnegie fellow and assistant professor of environmental planning and policy at UC Irvine. Manuel Pastor is a professor of sociology and director of the Equity Research Institute at USC.

An inspiration to L.A. Latino politicians

BOB CHAMBERLIN Los Angeles Times

GLORIA MOLINA, at lectern, and other L.A. County supervisors in 1995. She represented the 1st District on the board from 1991 to 2014.

[**Arellano,** from A1]
County-USC Medical Center in the 1960s and '70s. Her wars against male politicians who despised a lady who wasn't going to wait in line or hold her tongue. As a reporter, I learned about her influential roster of disciples, who proudly called themselves Molinistas and who have helped shape modern L.A., including nonprofit leaders, community activists and former Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

Molina was someone who used her power to fight for those who had none. Whose career never immolated in a dumpster fire of corruption or ego like that of too many of her Eastside colleagues. She was what a Latino politician should aspire to be — and what too few ever become.

We met at the California Community Foundation, the influential nonprofit that gives grants to community groups. I was interviewing her for a podcast about Proposition 187, the 1994 California ballot initiative that sought to make life miserable for illegal immigrants but instead inspired a generation of Latinos across the state to enter politics and turn L.A. and California into the superblue entities they are today.

Our talk was in a nondescript room — a streak of purple on the side of Molina's hair was by far the most colorful thing there.

Before we began, I admitted my family's admiration for her but tried to temper my enthusiasm — I was on assignment, after all. She was truly touched, then moved on to business.

For the next hour, I witnessed the same no-fools-suffered crusader who inspired and antagonized L.A.'s political scene for decades.

Molina spoke about the racist backlash she received for speaking out against Proposition 187. She was unapologetic about criticizing younger Latino activists for waving the Mexican flag during anti-187 rallies, maintaining that it alienated on-the-fence moderates. She lambasted U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein's weak-salsa opposition to the proposition with such vigor that after the podcast aired, Feinstein's office complained to me that Molina was unfair.

Though I had seen and heard Molina on television and the radio many times, it was awesome to see her hold court. She was funny. She was unapologetic. She was regal, yet not hubristic. She was everything I had made her out to be, and more.

I ran into her a couple of more times in the ensuing years, most recently when I moderated a 2021 L.A. Times panel discussion celebrating the 40th anniversary of Dodgers pitcher Fernando Valenzuela's historic rookie year.

We vowed to get together and talk shop, but our schedules never lined up.

Sadly, I don't think I'll have the chance to chat with her again. On Tuesday, Molina posted on Facebook that she has battled terminal cancer for the last three years and is now preparing for a "transition in life."

"You should know that I'm not sad," the 74-year-old grandmother wrote. "I'm really grateful for everyone in my life and proud of my family, career, mi gente, and the work we did on behalf of our community."

The news hit me like a gut punch.

Of all our political elders, I didn't expect her to leave us too soon. I fully expected her to live the rest of her years as the lioness of L.A. politics, enjoying a world where the Eastside can boast of a Latina Assembly member (Wendy Carrillo), a Latina state senator (Maria Elena Durazo) and a Latina (Hilda Solis) on the all-female Board of Supervisors.

The bad news immediately made me think of my mother, another force of nature brought down before her time by cancer.

Mami never particularly cared for politics, but Molina always resonated with her.

At first, I thought it was only because they were Mexican women. Later, I realized that Mami saw someone who never cussed. I once made her laugh and nod in agreement when I asked if she thought Molina was a *chingona* — a badass woman.

All this said, I've never harbored any illusions that Molina was perfect. Some of my L.A. friends felt she could have been more radical and didn't line up to support her when she attempted to oust then-Councilmember Jose Huizar in 2015. I was especially unhappy with her in 2008, when the supervisors passed regulations that banned taco trucks from parking in one place for more than an hour, under the threat of fines and possible jail time. Molina voted in favor, arguing that she was responding to complaints from East L.A. residents and business owners. (An L.A. County Superior Court judge eventually overturned the ordinance.)

That was one of the few times she misread Latino L.A. But when downtown's Grand Park — a project Molina championed for years — opened in 2012, food trucks were there. If the worst thing I could say about a politician is that she should've liked taco trucks more, then that's a hell of a career.

Villaraigosa, who was the best man at Molina's wedding, called her "a great woman, a trailblazer and a warrior" who was "always fighting for her community."

The two talked Tuesday.

"It was so hard for me to be on the phone call, because she's like my big sister," Villaraigosa said. "She was so strong. She told me she lived a great life. Then she said how proud she was of me, and I couldn't hold it anymore. She was then consoling me."

He plans to visit her this week, waiting his turn in the parade of people who want to say goodbye before it's too late.

As Molina prepares to meet the fate that awaits us all, I still have so many things I want to ask her about her life, legacy and the current state of L.A. politics. At the very least, I hope this *columna* reaches her, so I can tell her this:

Gloria, you were always a *chingona*. L.A. will miss you.

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MARK HUMPHREY Associated Press

LT. GOV. RANDY McNALLY, seen in 2021, has apologized for some of his social media activity. He denies accusations of hypocrisy or that his record is "anti-gay."

Tennessee GOP leader pauses social media use amid scandal

Lieutenant governor drew attention for his comments on risque photos of a gay model.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASHVILLE — Tennessee Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, a Republican, announced on Monday that he was "pausing" all social media activity after revelations that he had repeatedly commented on posts of nearly nude photos of a young gay model and other LGBTQ personalities.

McNally, 79, initially said last week that he "had no intention of stopping" when pressed about why he repeatedly commented on racy social media posts by the 20-year-old model.

He later issued an apology, saying it was not his intention to embarrass his friends, family or members of the state Legislature.

However, he has since received national attention — including being parodied on "Saturday Night Live" — with critics accusing him of being hypocritical.

McNally has supported legislation to restrict where certain drag shows can take place, and has highlighted his support of "traditional marriage" and of bills that "keep obscenity out of the public sphere."

Some of the posts that have sparked the most uproar include his comment on a photo of the model's backside, clad only in underwear. McNally wrote, "you can turn a rainy day into rainbow and sunshine," then added a comment using only heart and fire emojis.

In a separate post, he wrote a heart emoji on a photo of the man pulling down his underwear.

"While I see now that I should have been more careful about how my comments and activity would be perceived, my intent was always engagement and encouragement," McNally said in a statement. "For this reason, I will be pausing my social media activity in order to reflect and receive more guidance on the use of social media."

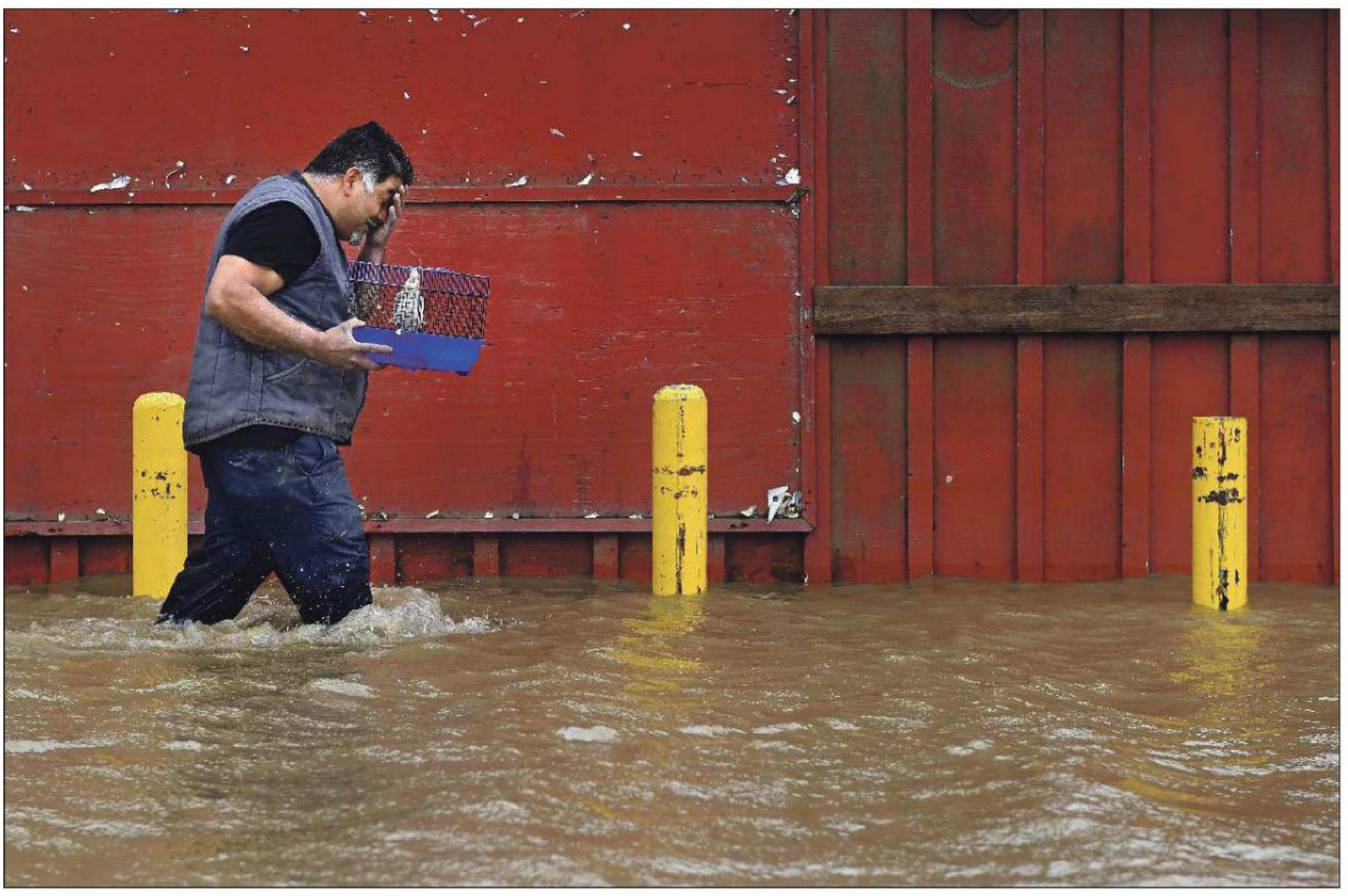
McNally added that although he may have made "some mistakes," he disagreed that he had a record of being "anti-gay."

He pointed to his opposition to a 2020 law that assured continued taxpayer funding of faith-based foster-care and adoption agencies even if those organizations exclude LGBTQ families and others based on religious beliefs.

Yet McNally then pointed to his support of "traditional marriage" and anti-public-obscenity bills.

"There is no contradiction here," he said.

McNally became lieutenant governor in 2017, and has been a state lawmaker since the late 1970s.



Photographs by WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

HERBETO ESTRADA rescues a bird from his home in Pajaro, Calif., on Tuesday. The town was inundated by a levee breach last week.

Latest storm brings more misery

The state's 11th atmospheric river system of the season causes more flooding, evacuations and outages

BY HAYLEY SMITH, RUBEN VIVES, TERRY CASTLEMAN, SUSANNE RUST AND BENJAMIN ORESKES

California's 11th atmospheric river storm of the season barreled through a beleaguered state Tuesday, dropping more rain and snow, sending thousands once again scrambling for higher ground and leaving more than 300,000 without power.

More than a dozen locations along major rivers were overflowing as the high-impact storm moved south through the state, including areas along the Salinas, Sacramento and Merced rivers. The Pajaro River, which suffered a levee breach from a similar storm last week, continued to spill water onto neighboring farmlands and communities.

At least 90 flood watches, warnings and advisories were in effect statewide, as were avalanche warnings in portions of Mono and Inyo counties and the Lake Tahoe area, according to the National Weather Service, which said the storm would "create considerable to lo-

[See **Storm,** B2]

A FARMWORKER clears a drain in a field in Watsonville, where officials were considering how to address near-overflowing levees protecting the city.

LAUSD unions to set dates of walkout

Workers and teachers will declare details of three-day strike that would close schools.

BY HOWARD BLUME

Leaders of a union that represents financially struggling low-wage workers will announce on Wednesday the timing of a three-day strike that would involve teachers and force the shutdown of Los Angeles public schools, dealing another blow to the education of more than 420,000 students.

The walkout of as many as 65,000 workers — expected to take place in the next two weeks — would represent the largest and longest full disruption of education in the nation's second-largest school system since the six-day teachers' strike of 2019. Not even the campus closures of the COVID-19 pandemic, which lasted more than a year in Los Angeles, resulted in a complete halt to academic instruction.

The labor action comes as district officials are discussing plans to offer two optional days of school over spring break — on April 3 and 4 — a project that has so far attracted a small fraction of students, about 6,000. Officials said they would be pleased to reach 340,000 or more but are determined to go forward with whoever signs up by the March 24 deadline.

This extra learning time — called acceleration days — has become caught up in the labor dispute, with leaders of the teachers union and its supporters calling these op-

[See **Strike,** B5]

Accused of luring victims with app

Prosecutor says man used Grindr to set up dates that turned into robberies.

BY JAMES QUEALLY

A Compton man has been charged with using the hookup site Grindr to lure more than 20 gay men into dates that tuned into robberies, sometimes at knife point, over the past two years, according to an indictment unsealed Monday.

Derrick Patterson, 24, was charged with more than 30 counts of robbery, burglary, grand theft and assault, according to the Los Angeles County district attorney's office. Patterson pleaded guilty last year to federal charges stemming from similar behavior, but the media attention surrounding his arrest led other victims to come forward, according to Deputy Dist. Atty. Richard Ceballos.

The robberies took place between March 2020 and March 2022, ending just weeks before Patterson was arrested in Inglewood last year. In at least two incidents, Patterson attacked

[See **Grindr,** B5]

WALLY SKALIJ Los Angeles Times

FORMER L.A. County Supervisor Gloria Molina, shown in 1999, says she's "proud of my family, career, mi gente, and the work we did on behalf of our community."

Gloria Molina says she's battling terminal cancer

Pioneering Latina politician is thankful for a 'long, fulfilling and beautiful life.'

BY REBECCA ELLIS

Gloria Molina, a trailblazing politician who made history as the first Latina elected to the state Assembly, the Los Angeles City Council and the county Board of Supervisors, said Tuesday that she is suffering from terminal cancer.

In a Facebook post, Molina, 74, wrote that the cancer, which she said she has been living with for three years, is "very aggressive." She said she is being treated at City of Hope, a cancer center, and said she feels fortunate to have lived a "long, fulfilling and beautiful life."

"I'm really grateful for everyone in my life and proud of my family, career, mi gente, and the work we did on behalf of our community," Molina wrote in the post, adding that she has a daughter and one grandchild, with another one on the way. "I have an amazing and caring family, wonderful friends, and worked with committed colleagues and a loyal team."

Molina spent 23 years on the Board of Supervisors, where she represented the 1st District from 1991 to 2014. The district stretched from Koreatown, Pico-Union and East Los Angeles all the way east to Pomona and included much of the San Gabriel Valley.

[See **Molina,** B4]

Salmon fishing season closed due to low population

It's a bid to save the Chinook. 'This didn't have to happen,' an industry leader says.

BY IAN JAMES

Fishing boats would normally fan out along the California coast to catch Chinook salmon in the spring, but regulators have announced the fishing season will be shut down this year.

It's only the second time in history that the ocean salmon fishery has been closed in California, and the decision reflects a major decline in fish populations after the state's driest three-year period on record.

People who depend on salmon fishing said the closure will bring economic hardships for many in the industry.

"This whole situation is really depressing," said Sarah Bates, who fishes with a commercial boat and usually sells her catch through a community fishing association in San Francisco.

"I think we're going to lose some boats from both our commercial and recreational fleets," Bates said. "The public of California is going to have to get used to not having salmon on their barbecue, unless they want it from very far away."

The Pacific Fishery Management Council, a multistate, quasi-federal body that decides on ocean fishing seasons, adopted proposals to close the fishing season at a meeting last week, and is expected to formally approve the closure at a meeting in early April.

The National Marine Fisheries Service also announced that the coastal sport fishing season, which had been scheduled to open

[See **Salmon,** B2]

8 rescued from San Gabriel River in Azusa

Eight dogs also were pulled to safety from fast-moving water. Crews search for ninth person. **B3**

Brain-dead after police incident

Family of Montclair man on life support is questioning the official account of what went down after 911 call. **B3**

Lottery **B5**

SPORTS ON THE BACK: 12 things that must go right for UCLA to win title No. 12. **B10**

Storm causes flooding, evacuations, outages

[**Storm,** from B1]
cally catastrophic flooding impacts below 5,000 feet elevation."

About 336,000 households across the state were without power as of Tuesday afternoon, according to data compiled by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. The majority of those households were in Santa Clara County, which had about 128,000 customers without power.

In the San Francisco Bay Area, the storm was causing minor urban flooding, road closures, downed trees and gusty winds of up to 50 mph, said Eleanor Dhuyvetter, a weather service meteorologist. Because of strong winds, about 40% of flights out of San Francisco International Airport experienced delays, and 72 had been canceled as of Tuesday afternoon.

In downtown San Francisco, a shelter-in-place order was instituted for the area around a 52-story skyscraper at 555 California St. One window was blown out amid winds of up to 50 mph and another was damaged on the 43rd floor of what was previously called the Bank of America building.

Fire officials said the gusts might have contributed to the dangerous situation.

In Monterey County, where a farm town was already inundated by the Pajaro River, more than 10,000 residents were under evacuation warnings and orders because of the surging Salinas River. County officials feared that more flooding could lead to significant crop loss in the heavily agricultural region.

Up to 6 inches of rain was expected to fall before midnight in the Santa Lucia Mountains, which include part of the Salinas River watershed, Dhuyvetter said.

On Tuesday afternoon, officials were considering how to address near-overflowing levees protecting Watsonville, where evacuation orders were expanded to include the area of Corralitos Creek. All schools in the area were closed.

"The real question today is about manually breaching a section [of the Pajaro River] to relieve pressure," said Zach Friend, a Santa Cruz County supervisor whose district includes Watsonville.

The breach would occur at the Highway 1 bridge, which is downstream from the city and surrounded by farmland.

Only about half of the 350-foot section that was breached upstream of Pajaro late Friday had been stabilized.

Despite the threat, some residents in the migrant town of about 3,000 people chose not to evacuate.

NOAH BERGER Associated Press

FLOODWATERS fill a farm in the Monterey County town of Pajaro on Monday. A breach in the Pajaro River levee continues to spill water.

"I know some people criticize us for not leaving, but the flooding danger isn't here, it's somewhere else," said Dora Alvarez, 54, pointing south toward Salinas Road, which was submerged.

But officials said flooding wasn't the only risk in the area. Major utility lines run through the levee under Highway 1, and a wastewater treatment facility is downstream.

"If the water continues to erode through the levee such that it reenters the river system ... it could overwhelm the river system downstream of Highway 1," where the wastewater treatment plant for Watsonville sits, said Mark Strudley, executive director of the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency.

If the water overtops or seeps through the levee, Strudley said, "we stand to destroy parts of the plant and may end up releasing untreated sewage to the floodplain, to the river and then ultimately to the Monterey Bay."

Meanwhile, in the Sacramento area, officials warned of high winds and heavy precipitation, with the heaviest rain likely in Shasta County and over the foothills and northern Sierra Nevada.

The Tres Pinos area in San Benito County was rattled by a magnitude 3.4 earthquake as the storm pounded the region, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Farther inland, flood advisories were in effect from Bakersfield to Yosemite National Park, with a high risk of flash flooding east of the Fresno area, said Jim Brusda, a weather service meteorologist in Hanford.

"The soil just can't absorb all the new rain that we're going to get, and that's the problem," Brusda said. "The rainfall might be a little bit less than last week, but the impacts are going to be the same, if not more, because the rivers and creeks are already so high, and the ground is already saturated."

Precipitation totals will increase significantly east of Highway 99 — including up to 4 inches of rain in the southern Sierra and more than 2 feet of snow in mountain areas around 7,000 feet, Brusda said. Areas at 8,000 feet or higher could see more than 6 feet of snow.

The atmospheric river storm, which is drawing moisture from Hawaii in a phenomenon sometimes referred to as a "pineapple express," was rapidly moving south, raising concerns of flooding in burn scars and more snow on Southern California's already covered mountains.

Flood watches are in effect in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Los Angeles counties through Wednesday morning. Up to 4 inches of rain could fall in Santa Barbara and western Ventura County, said Ryan Kittell, a weather service meteorologist in Oxnard.

Santa Barbara County officials have issued a mandatory evacuation order for residents in areas around the burn scars of the Thomas, Alisal and Cave fires, advising residents to leave immediately. Burn scars are known to be waxy, water-repellent and highly vulnerable to debris flows and other hazards.

The worst of the storm occurred in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties Tuesday afternoon and into the evening. Los Angeles was expected to bear the brunt of the weather later Tuesday night. The National Weather Service in Los Angeles said rain would probably increase in intensity later in the day, with roadway flooding and rock slides and mudslides possible.

There were moderate threats for river flooding in the region, including along the Ventura, Sisquoc and Santa Ynez rivers, Kittell said. The San Gabriel and Los Angeles rivers "will definitely have a lot of flow, and that usually will result in swift-water rescues, especially in homeless encampments."

Residents in the San Bernardino Mountains also braced for more rain and snow — even as some people remain trapped from previous snowstorms. At least a dozen people were found dead after those storms blocked roads and left residents stranded and unable to dig out from their homes.

"Significant" rainfall totals are expected above 3,000 feet, said Philip Gonsalves of the weather service in San Diego, which covers the San Bernardino area. "We're looking at anywhere from 2.5 to locally 5 inches," he said. Snow is expected around 8,000 feet or higher.

"The bad news is that this event is going to dump a lot of rain on the remaining snowpack, and the snowmelt is going to contribute to the threat of flooding, or debris flows and rock slides," Gonsalves said.

Flood watches were in effect across the San Bernardino, Riverside and Santa Ana mountains, as well as portions of the Inland Empire "in close proximity to the foothills" and inland Orange County until Wednesday afternoon, he said.

Orange County Supervisor Katrina Foley declared a local state of emergency to support storm responses in the area, prompted in part by a hillside collapse in Newport Beach that threatened some homes and sent a chunk of bluff tumbling down.

"My hope is that there is no further sliding on the shore, but if these three homes fall, a cascading effect may happen to the 50 other homes on the bluff and we must be prepared in case that happens," Foley said in a statement.

A state of emergency from Gov. Gavin Newsom remains in place in 40 counties statewide.

The storm arrives amid near-record snowpack and one of California's wettest winters in recent memory. Nine back-to-back atmospheric river storms hit the state in late December and early January, and a 10th deluged the state last week.

Though conditions are expected to clear after the storm, the relief will be short-lived as yet another atmospheric river has set its sights on California next week, forecasters said — just in time for the first day of spring.

There's been little reprieve for residents in communities that are only now beginning to recover from inclement weather earlier this winter. El Gallito bakery in the community of Planada in Merced County has stayed open through a handful of storms.

The bakery was flooded along with the town in late January. Now the store's doors are protected by sandbags and tarps, and the family who runs it plans to take measures to flood-proof their home as well.

A pantry at the front of the store is notably top-heavy, with the bottom shelves mostly empty. Every day at closing time, they "grab everything from the bottom shelves and put it on the counters," wary of losing inventory again.

Keeping the business going is essential, said Leonardo Villagomez, the son of owners Luis and Estella.

The family needs the income.

"We don't have a choice," he said.

Vives reported from Pajaro, Castleman from Fresno, Rust from Menlo Park, and Smith and Oreskes from Los Angeles.

Low salmon numbers reflect dry 2020 conditions

[**Salmon,** from B1]
in most areas on April 1, will be canceled through May 15.

Fisheries officials have cited the nearly record-low numbers of fall-run Chinook salmon that returned to spawn in the Sacramento River last year.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife said the estimated number of 3-year-old adults that are likely to return to the Sacramento River this year to spawn is less than 170,000, one of the lowest forecasts in the 15 years that officials have been using their current assessment method.

Officials estimated fewer than 104,000 fall-run Chinook are likely to return to the Klamath River, the second lowest estimate since 1997.

The only other time salmon fishing has been entirely shut down along the California coast was in 2008.

"We don't have enough salmon this year to have a season," said John McManus, president of the Golden State Salmon Assn.

"This is incredibly sad," McManus said. "There's thousands of people in California and in Oregon both that rely on Central Valley salmon to make a living."

Fishing and environmental groups have criticized Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration for water policies they argue have failed to prioritize river flows for salmon.

"This didn't have to happen," McManus said. "We don't have to suffer this again in the future, and we won't if some changes are made."

ERIC RISBERG Associated Press

A WOMAN hauls in a salmon in 2019 near Bolinas, Calif., in Marin County. Low numbers of salmon returned to spawn in the Sacramento River last year.

His association, together with other fishing and environmental groups, has two pending court cases against the state and the federal government challenging water management policies.

State officials have pointed out that declines in salmon populations typically follow dry years, and have said they are prioritizing efforts to rebuild fish populations.

Chuck Bonham, director of the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, said recently that the decline is part of a decades-long trend and the last three years of record drought "only further stressed our salmon populations."

Bonham said the low population reflects the extremely dry conditions of 2020.

Fluctuations in salmon numbers are typically tied to flows in rivers, with wetter conditions helping the fish flourish.

Bonham said the storms and high river flows this year should benefit the salmon. In 2010, for example, ample rainfall led to higher estimates of returning adults in 2012 and 2013.

"That gives you some optimism that in three years from now, you could see the same kind of thing," Bonham said. "This can turn around."

When salmon return to California rivers to spawn, they lay their eggs in gravel nests in streambeds. The juvenile fish migrate to the Pacific, often returning in three years to complete the cycle.

Normally, heavy spring runoff is ideal for pushing young salmon downriver to the ocean. But because of the low numbers of adult salmon that came back to spawn last year, McManus said, "our best guess is that there are not a ton of wild baby salmon waiting to take advantage of this runoff."

State and federal officials also manage hatcheries that rear and release millions of Chinook salmon each year. And high river flows this spring are expected help more of those salmon thrive as they are released in the coming months.

Dams have for decades blocked salmon from reaching their traditional spawning streams, and the fish have increasingly struggled as climate change has intensified drought and brought warmer temperatures.

Complicating the situation, scientists have found that a deficiency of thiamine is harming Chinook populations, and they suspect salmon may be feeding too heavily on numerous anchovies.

In the Sacramento River, other salmon runs are at risk. Spring-run Chinook are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, while winter-run Chinook are endangered.

Both commercial and recreational anglers catch fall-run Chinook along the coast. Officials said the commercial fishery brought in more than 211,000 fish in 2022.

Last year's season included a range of permitted dates from May to October in different zones along the coast, while the Klamath zone in far Northern California was closed.

In one plan aimed at helping salmon, four dams on the Klamath River are scheduled to be removed, with work starting this year.

State and federal biologists have also worked with leaders of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe on an experimental project on the McCloud River, where they released thousands of juvenile winter-run salmon last year, allowing them to swim upstream of Shasta Dam for the first time in 80 years.

The commercial fishery, meanwhile, could take time to recover. Bates said she and others anticipate the 2024 ocean fishing season will also be closed or limited. She said some in the commercial industry will probably adapt by focusing more on Dungeness crab and other fisheries, including black cod, halibut and rockfish.

"Those of us that survive this closure are going to have to be creative and hard-working, which fishermen generally are," Bates said. "There are a fair number of us that I think will drop out, and a fair number of us that will survive."

She and others said the state and federal hatcheries will play a vital role in helping the fish population. Bates said she is somewhat optimistic about how the salmon will fare in the long term.

"I don't think it's a death knell," Bates said. "This is a very resilient species. So I think with appropriate water management and appropriate fisheries management, that we will recover. I just hope that there are still boats and captains around when the species recovers.

GINA FERAZZI Los Angeles Times

FROM ROAD TO RUIN

Residents of Springville, Calif., check out the damage Tuesday after the swollen Tule River crumbled parts of Globe Drive. The area is under another flood watch as more rain is predicted for Tulare County.

Eight people, eight dogs rescued from San Gabriel River in Azusa

BY NATHAN SOLIS

Eight people and eight dogs were rescued from the San Gabriel River in Azusa after they were swept away by fast-moving water, according to authorities.

Firefighters received reports that a ninth person was also in the river, but it's unclear if that information was accurate, Los Angeles County Fire Department spokesperson Ruben Muñoz said.

A 911 call that reported people in the river came in shortly after 6 p.m. Monday, and firefighters responded to the area of North Todd and West Sierra Madre avenues in Azusa, authorities said.

Initially, officials said seven people were in the water but updated the number to eight. Five people were assisted out of the river and three were hoisted by helicopter, Muñoz said.

None of the people required hospitalization, but the conditions of the animals were unclear. Fire officials did not explain how the people ended up in or near the water. During previous storms, emergency crews have rescued people living in homeless encampments along the riverbed from fast-moving floodwater.

Fire officials did not know the status of the people rescued Monday.

Officials continued to search the river and flood channels until 10 p.m. for the possible ninth person, according to the Fire Department.

The reporting party who told emergency officials about the possible ninth person left the scene and did not provide additional information, Muñoz said.

"We continued to patrol the area around the flood channels for any signs of bodies and did not locate anyone," Muñoz said.

Brain-dead after police encounter

Family of Montclair man questions official account of what went down after 911 call.

BY SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

A 42-year-old man has been declared brain-dead days after a violent confrontation with police, and now his family is questioning the Montclair Police Department's account of what happened and why it used force against him.

Antonio Ibanez is on life support at Montclair Hospital Medical Center after police used a Taser and batons to detain him on March 5, said Humberto Guizar, the Ibanez family's attorney. Guizar said the family believes Ibanez needed help when officers were called to the 4100 block of Mission Boulevard after midnight when someone reported that a man armed with an object was threatening a woman.

The woman who had called police was in her car with her daughters when she was confronted by the suspect, according to authorities. She believed he was under the influence of drugs, police said.

Ibanez rented a room in the woman's home, Guizar said.

"When officers attempted to detain the suspect a use of force occurred," police said. "Once detained medical aid was requested."

Guizar said he and the Ibanez family have found inconsistencies in the police account. Despite reaching out multiple times, he said, the Ibanez family hasn't heard from the Police Department about what happened.

"The Police Department has not been very transparent," said Guizar, adding that the Ibanez family is considering taking legal action.

Montclair police said they have handed over the investigation to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

Relatives are also questioning why it took five days for police officials to release any details of the incident to the public.

Guizar said that he and other attorneys for the family have interviewed the woman who called the police and that she didn't mention that Ibanez was armed.

"If that was the case, we want to hear the 911 call," Guizar said.

Ibanez's family has made a series of public records requests, hoping to get copies of the call, body-camera footage and radio traffic.

"From our interview we did of [the woman who called 911], he was acting strange, just weird, and so she was concerned that he might hurt himself or somebody, so she called for assistance," he said. "There was no immediate threat of harm to anyone."

Weary residents in Merced battle floodwaters and home break-ins

BY TERRY CASTLEMAN

MERCED, Calif. — In recent weeks, Merced neighbors Mariya Nelson and Beth Lee took on more than just rebuilding their storm-battered homes.

After a series of break-ins, they're now the de facto neighborhood watch for a well-to-do strip of homes that runs along a road abutting Bear Creek, which has flooded multiple times in recent weeks during California's series of storms.

They were forced from their homes in early January when more than 3 feet of water displaced them.

Then came the burglaries. Nelson, 33, counts at least seven attempts on her home.

"We got hit hard," she said.

Rain and strong winds inundated Merced on Tuesday, with some areas under an evacuation warning and the threat of more damage on the horizon. Sandbags line the entryway of Nelson's home, and a tarp covers a portion of the roof, which collapsed in recent downpours.

She said she'd been in this house "almost 25 years, and we've never ever had anybody break in." Now, with another evacuation warning issued for her neighborhood, Nelson saw break-in attempts increase.

Nelson said a would-be thief parked in her driveway Tuesday morning in daylight and approached her house. The individual ran away, she said, only when she appeared at the door.

"My house is full of kids," she added, and she fears for their safety.

Lee, 53, is no stranger to disaster. She lost her previous house in the 2020 Creek fire and used the insurance proceeds to buy her current home.

The defense attorney currently resides in a rental while her home is being repaired. But she said recent break-ins, coupled with the flood warnings, spurred her to stay home.

She counts at least nine break-in attempts in the last two months.

"We started putting the house back together" after the last flood "and had to stop again" due to the recent flood warning, she said.

Now the house is empty, and two storage pods in the driveway hold her possessions — or they did, before burglars managed to get into them and take what they could.

When she bought this house on the river, Lee knew it was in a flood zone, but she said she reasoned with herself that "we were in a drought."

Reflecting on the experience of suffering a catastrophic fire and then a flood within three years, she shrugged. "I guess this is climate change?"

Nearby, at the Merced County fairground, two large gymnasiums were converted into emergency shelters for those displaced by storms.

All 200 of the available beds were empty Tuesday evening. John Ceccoli, a spokesman for the Merced County Human Services Agency, said the facility had seen a maximum of 36 people at once since reopening last week.

More than 600 people stayed at the facility during heavy storms in January, he added. As sheets of rain came down outside Tuesday afternoon, workers wondered whether another flood was coming.

"I've never tracked the weather so closely in my life," Ceccoli said.

In nearby Planada, El Gallito bakery has stayed open through a handful of storms.

The bakery was flooded along with the town in late January. Now the store's doors are protected by sandbags and tarps, and the family who runs it has worked to flood-proof their home as well. Appliances damaged by floodwaters — more than a foot high and containing sewage — have mostly been replaced, thanks in part to community support on GoFundMe.

A pantry at the front of the store is notably top-heavy, with the bottom shelves mostly empty. Every day at closing time, the family members remove goods from the bottom shelves and place them on the counters, wary of losing inventory again.

Keeping the business going is essential, said Leonardo Villagomez, son of owners Luis and Estella Villagomez.

The family needs the income.

"We don't have a choice," he said.

Times staff writer Benjamin Oreskes contributed to this report.

To Bruins, this wasn't just any stray cat

BY NOAH GOLDBERG

A legend has left us.

A memorial service is planned. Shirts are being sold. People far and wide are posting tributes online and thousands are responding and liking the posts.

Few achieve this kind of celebrity in life and adulation in death. But UCLA's beloved stray — Powell Cat — did.

The cat, who used they/them pronouns, according to the official Powell Cat Instagram page, died at age 10 Thursday, ascending to kitty heaven, leaving behind earthly fans and friends grieving the loss of a campus mainstay. The cat lived at the university for years, with the earliest known photos dating back to 2015.

"Rest in pawer, Powell Cat," tweeted the official UCLA page.

Powell Cat was such a feature of campus life at UCLA that the school sold shirts featuring the black-and-white stray, and campus tour guides mentioned the furry feline when leading prospective students around the college.

KATHY BROWN UCLA Library

POWELL CAT, shown in 2021, was a feature of campus life. The beloved mascot died last week at age 10.

"People have called Powell Cat the informal mascot of UCLA," said Kathy Brown, assistant to the University Librarian at UCLA Library and primary staff caretaker of Powell Cat since 2020. Brown, who works in the Charles E. Young Research Library, came to campus every day during the pandemic and took on the responsibility of feeding Powell Cat and making sure the friendly cat was safe and taken care of.

The cat first lived by their namesake Powell Library. About two years later, Powell Cat ventured off to the brick steps of Glorya Kaufman Hall, where they could be found soaking up the sun or sprawled out playing with toys or catnip brought to them by friends and admirers.

Powell Cat was known for being incredibly friendly to humans, cuddling up with hundreds of different students.

One student told Brown after the cat's death that he heard about Powell Cat when applying to UCLA. The first thing he did when he got to campus was go to visit Powell Cat. The stray was there, waiting for him at Kaufman Hall.

"Some of my fondest memories, and this is shared by a lot of students, is [Powell Cat] would crawl into your lap and get comfortable and you had to be somewhere but you couldn't leave because Powell Cat. Powell Cat made [students] late to a lot of 8 a.m. classes," Brown said.

The last time Brown saw Powell Cat, one week ago, her legs fell asleep because Powell Cat lay on them for so long.

L.A. County won't retry Weinstein in sexual assaults

BY JAMES QUEALLY

Los Angeles County prosecutors will not seek to retry Harvey Weinstein in the sexual assault of two women, including Jennifer Siebel Newsom, after a jury hung on those charges last year, prosecutors announced Tuesday.

After a two-month trial, in which he was accused of raping four women in hotels between 2004 and 2013, Weinstein was convicted in December of sexually assaulting an Italian model and actress following a film festival in Beverly Hills.

Jurors acquitted Weinstein of assaulting a massage therapist and deadlocked on charges that he assaulted Lauren Young — a former actress who also testified against him in New York — and Siebel Newsom, who was an actress when she alleged he attacked her in a hotel room in the mid-2000s.

The Times typically does not identify victims of sexual assault, but Siebel Newsom, the wife of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, and Young have either testified against Weinstein in public court settings or identified themselves in media accounts.

Weinstein was sentenced to 16 years in a California prison last month. Combined with the 23-year sentence he received after being convicted of rape in New York in 2020, the disgraced Hollywood mogul, who is 70 and in poor health, is all but assured to spend the rest of his life in prison.

ETIENNE LAURENT Pool Photo

WEINSTEIN, 70, has been sentenced to a combined 39 years in prison after two trials.

Young appeared in court Tuesday and asked prosecutors to retry her case. Siebel Newsom, however, submitted a statement asking the district attorney's office not to pursue a second trial on her allegation.

"The First Partner's primary intention in coming forward was to ensure that Weinstein spends the rest of his life in prison. While the jury could not reach a verdict on the charges relating to her experience, we believe that her testimony, in chorus with the other brave victims' testimonies, led to Weinstein's conviction and the 16-year sentence he faces in California after he serves his New York sentence," her attorney, Elizabeth Fegan, said in a statement.

"Had the court not handed down a fitting sentence," Fegan said, "my client would have been ready to support the prosecutors if they opted to retry Weinstein, even considering the enormous emotional toll it would inflict on her."

Deputy Dist. Atty. Paul Thompson, the lead prosecutor on the case, said Weinstein would have faced only an additional year in prison if convicted of the count related to Young's allegation.

Weinstein will now be returned to custody in New York, where he is still appealing his conviction, according to his attorney, Mark Werksman.

Juda Engelmayer, Weinstein's spokesman, called the prosecutors' decision Tuesday "an important step toward Harvey Weinstein's appeal in L.A."

"Now, he and his team can focus on Jane Doe 1's claims alone, of which there is ample support and proof that corroborates Harvey's claims that it never happened," Engelmayer wrote in an email.

Gloria Molina hailed as a fighter, trailblazer

[**Molina,** from B1]

Molina's friends and former colleagues called her a fighter, determined to bring more people who looked like her into the white- and male-dominated rooms of California politics.

"Gloria is a trailblazer," said Antonia Hernandez, the longtime president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "Gloria was one of the earliest women to open doors for a whole bunch of other Latina women — not only in L.A., but in California."

Hernandez, who as a young lawyer met Molina in 1974, said Molina repeatedly urged Latinas to work in all levels of government. She said Molina was the one who urged her to go to Washington, D.C., and work for Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.).

"She was always calling. She was always saying there's an opportunity here," Hernandez recalled Tuesday. "She really nurtured a lot of folks to go into public service and politics."

Miguel Santana, chief executive of the Weingart Foundation, said he was inspired by Molina while in high school and worked for her for 13 years when she was a supervisor. He said Molina, whom he now counts as a close mentor and friend, always stuck out on the board as a tireless advocate for women and Latinas.

"She was always an activist in her way of governing," Santana recalled. "She was willing to take on any righteous cause."

Robert Gauthier Los Angeles Times

FRIENDS AND former colleagues say Gloria Molina encouraged Latinas to go into politics and public service. "Gloria was one of the earliest women to open doors for a whole bunch of other Latina women," one says.

Molina started her political life in the 1970s as an activist in the Chicano movement and advocate for Mexican American women who were sterilized against their will at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center. Years later, she fought for the replacement of the hospital after an earthquake, accusing the white supervisors of racism after they said they wanted to see it rebuilt with a smaller footprint.

"It's sad for me as someone who loves her and knows her to know that she's transitioning in her life," Santana said. "But I also know that she's incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to fight on behalf of her community."

Colleagues said she made an indelible mark on Los Angeles County, particularly in East L.A. As a lawmaker, Molina was known for mobilizing her constituents to prevent a state prison from opening in a predominantly Latino part of her district marred by freeways and other unwelcome projects.

She's also credited as a major force behind the creation of Grand Park, which stretches three blocks between City Hall and the Music Center.

Molina pushed city and county officials to create new parkland in downtown L.A. as part of the Grand Avenue redevelopment project, which brought two high-rises to a site across from Walt Disney Concert Hall. She also ensured that Grand Park was constructed before the towers were built.

Supervisor Hilda Solis, who succeeded Molina on the board, said she would introduce a motion next week to name Grand Park after Molina.

"Seeing her break these glass ceilings inspired me," Solis, who was the first Latina elected to the state Senate, said in a statement. "I remember dreaming of one day serving our community just as she did, with passion."

Near the end of her tenure on the Board of Supervisors, she urged voters to defeat Sheriff Lee Baca, who was running at the time for a fifth term, saying he had presided over "an extraordinary cascade of scandals that have exposed the dismal state of the department and the jails he runs."

A year later, she launched her own campaign to return to the City Council but was defeated by then-Councilmember Jose Huizar.

Times staff writer David Zahniser contributed to this report.

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LEGAL NOTICES 1300

Bids Wanted

El Centro Regional Medical Center, An Agency of the City of El Centro, has issued RFP 2023-0001 for Diagnostic Radiology Services.
Interested bidders may contact Reno Kitane, Supply Chain Manager, for a copy of the RFP documents. The Supply Chain Manager can be reached by phone at (760) 339-4018 or by e-mail at reno.kitane@ecrmc.org. All questions or requests for clarification concerning the RFP shall be submitted in writing or via e-mail to Reno Kitane by March 20, 2023 at 4:00 PM Pacific Time. A Zoom meeting will be scheduled to discuss submitted questions by interested vendors on March 22, 2023 and March 24, 2023. No questions or requests for clarification will be accepted by telephone.

Event Date
RFP Release March 13, 2023
Submission of questions or clarification
By March 20, 2023 @ 4:00pm PT
Discussion of questions and clarifications
March 22, 2023 and March 24, 2023
(Zoom link will be provided)
Letter of Intent to Propose March 31, 2023
Proposal Due Date
April 15, 2023
Interviews with Finalists
April 26, 2023 to April 28, 2023
Notice Award of Contract
May 1, 2023
Contract Start Date
July 1, 2023

Bids Wanted

Request for Sealed Bid: HEAD START Playground Replacement & Renovation Project

Children's Institute (CII), a participant in the Federal Head Start Program is seeking sealed bids from Contractors for a Playground Replacement & Renovation Project. Sealed Bids are due by March 31, 2023. Please direct questions regarding this request for Sealed Bids to Lizeth Bravo at lbravo@childrensinstitute.org.

Legal Notices

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS

Notice is hereby given that proposals will be accepted by the South Coast Air Quality Management District, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765 for the following: Q2023-09 Temporary Employment Services Closing Date: 4/5/2023 2:00 PM Contact: Emily Liemsakul 909-396-2105 The RFQ may be obtained through the Internet at: http://www.aqmd.gov/nav/grants-bids If you have questions or would like a copy of the RFQ mailed to you, call the contact person. It is the policy of the South Coast AQMD to ensure that all businesses including minority-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, disabled veteran-owned businesses and small businesses have a fair and equitable opportunity to compete for and participate in South Coast AQMD contracts.

South Coast AQMD Procurement Unit
3/8, 3/15/23
CNS-3677293#

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JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

GURSH
WITAA
VORNEP
KREADR

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Hey! He got it right! Attaboy!
Which one is the circle?
This is the circle!
3/15
THEIR APPROACH TO TEACHING ABOUT CIRCLES, SQUARES, TRIANGLES, ETC. WAS ---

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: EAGLE JOKER UNPACK PUPPET
Answer: When the clouds parted allowing them to see the summit, they got a — PEEK AT THE PEAK

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SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso)*: 21CHCL01415

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
EKATERINA PORUBOVA, and Does 1 to 10

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can located these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site *(www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)*, the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE**: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la información a continuación.*
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presenter una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo prolegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puedo encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de extención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y hiener sin más advertencia.
Hay otros requisites legales. Es recommendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remission a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisites para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin lines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin lines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
9425 PENFIELD AVENUE
CHATWORTH, CA 91311

The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el número del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abodgado, es):
Claudia Gavrilescu, Esq. (CA BAR NO.: 333030)
REESE LAW GROUP
3168 Lionhead Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92010
760/842-5850 (File No. 566299)

DATE *(Fecha)*: 01/18/2022
Sherri R. Carter Executive Officer/Clerk of Court, Clerk (Secretario), by L. Lopez, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL)
2/22, 3/1, 3/8, 3/15/23
CNS-3672054#
Published in the Los Angeles Times

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)
CASE NUMBER *(Número del Caso)*: 21CHLC08461

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
ERNESTO MORENO

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
WELLS FARGO BANK, N.A.

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can located these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site *(www.lawhelpcalifornia.org)*, the California Courts Online Self-Help Center *(www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp)*, or by contacting your local court or county bar association. **NOTE**: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! *Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la información a continuación.*
Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presenter una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo prolegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puedo encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de extención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y hiener sin más advertencia.
Hay otros requisites legales. Es recommendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remission a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisites para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin lines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin lines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos extentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de $10,000 ó más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y dirección de la corte es):
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
9425 Penfield Avenue
CHATSWORTH, CA 91311

The name, address, and telephone number of the plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el número del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abodgado, es):
HARLAN M. REESE, ESQ. (CA bar No.: 118226)
REESE LAW GROUP
3168 Lionhead Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92010
760/842-5850 (File No. 567236)

DATE *(Fecha)*: 04/20/2022
SHERRI R. CARTER EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLERK OF COURT, Clerk (Secretario), by J. KHATRI, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL)
3/1, 3/8, 3/15, 3/22/23
CNS-3675024#
Published in the Los Angeles Times

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)
Case Number (Numero del Caso): 22STCV34672

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
HALEY MARIE CARROLL, an individual;

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (LO ESTA DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE):
RCP FINANCIAL, INC., a California stock corporation; 7M FILMS, INC., a California stock corporation; SHEKINAH CHURCH, a California nonprofit corporation; ROBERT ISREAL SHINN, an individual; and HANNAH GRACE SHINN, an individual;

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web Site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of $10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.
¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 dias, la corte puede decider en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la informacion a continuacion.
Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presenter una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia.

The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y direccion de la corte es):
The Superior Court of Los Angeles-Stanley Mosk Courthouse
111 North Hill Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is: (El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):
Daniel R. Gutenplan, Enenstein Pham & Glass
650 Town Center Drive, Suite 840
Costa Mesa, CA 92626; (714) 292-0262
Link to the Complaint: https://www.dropbox.com/s/fqam25q4lwahypd/2022.10.28%20Plaintiffs%27%20Complaint%20%2800469277%29.pdf?dl=0

Date: (Fecha) 10-28-2022

Sherri R. Carter Clerk (Secretario)
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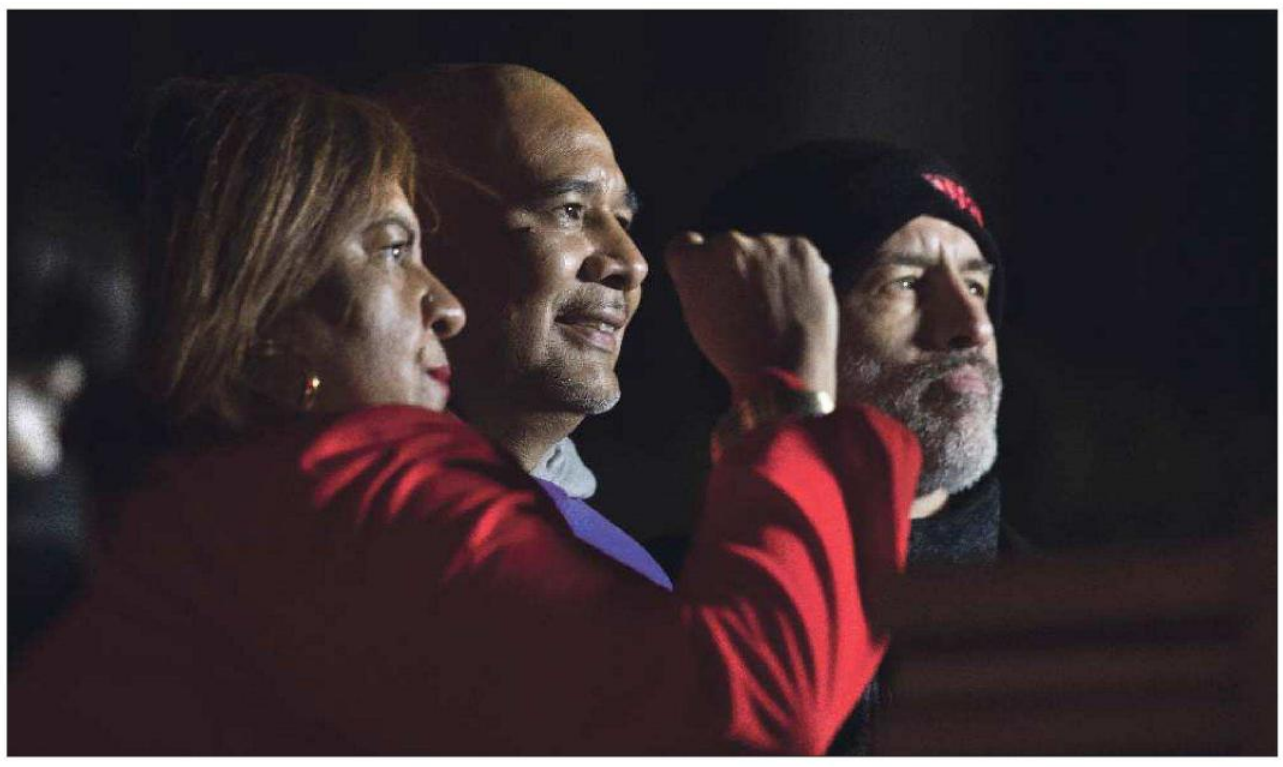
LAUSD unions to announce dates of strike



BRIAN VAN DER BRUG Los Angeles Times

UNITED TEACHERS Los Angeles President Cecily Myart-Cruz, left, SEIU Local 99 President Conrado Guerrero, center, and UTLA Executive Director Jeff Good at a union rally in Los Angeles in December.

[**Strike,** from B1]
tional days a costly and poor use of resources.

The looming walkout would be led by Local 99 of Service Employees International Union. Local 99 represents about 30,000 workers including bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria and other food service workers, campus security aides, teaching assistants and aides for students with disabilities.

Local 99 would be joined in a solidarity strike by United Teachers Los Angeles, which represents 35,000 teachers, counselors, therapists, nurses and librarians.

L.A. schools Supt. Alberto Carvalho announced Monday night that campuses would close because he could not ensure the safety of students without teachers and support staff.

To families, he said: "We encourage you to begin discussions with your employer, child care providers and others now."

To employees, he said: "We are making every effort to provide students with resources for learning, social emotional well-being and nourishment in the event of a strike."

For many union members, the walkout represents a painful but necessary step toward reaching a contract agreement to improve the lives of employees, while also helping to recruit and retain high-quality workers who serve students.

"Hopefully, there won't be a three-day stoppage but, evidently, this is something that we might have to do to get the attention of the people to make the decision to increase our wages," said Karimu McNeal, who works as a parent and community representative for 20 hours a week at Dorsey High in South Los Angeles.

McNeal said she planned to attend a Wednesday afternoon rally in downtown's Grand Park hosted by Local 99 and UTLA.

For many parents, a strike would represent unnecessary harm to students and families.

"SEIU is one of the unions that defends workers who have the lowest wages," said Diana Guillen, head of the district parent advisory committee for English learners. "These workers are part of our community. We are in agreement that they should get a raise. But I'm not in agreement with a strike. Academically this won't help at all."

The teachers union had significant parent support during its 2019 strike; there is no reliable gauge of where most parents stand this time.

Moderators of the large Facebook group Parents Supporting Teachers said blame should fall on school district officials if campuses close.

"There is not one parent in this school district who wants a strike, not one," cofounders Nicolle Fefferman and Jenna Schwartz said in a statement. "And while we aren't budget specialists, we see a constant rolling out of new programs, new logos, acceleration days and other initiatives that cost huge amounts of money when the true value of our schools are the people inside.

"You know what is cheaper and less cumbersome than outsourcing tutoring? Smaller class sizes. Just like our kids won't do well in school without food, neither will our staff," the group leaders said. "We don't want acceleration days; we want cafeteria workers paid fairly."

Another view came from Lourdes Lopez, who has children at three district schools.

"Why are they going on strike when our children need to be in school? I understand that the unions want to impact, but they can't be doing this with the district," said Lopez, a member of the group Our Voice: Communities for Quality Education. "Our children are so far behind. ... There is much anxiety for our families, especially Latino families like mine. We live in cramped spaces and we will have our children at home during the day without the ability to teach them — the disruption will be enormous."

Local 99 leaders said their strike would be in protest of alleged illegal actions by L.A. Unified during the negotiation process. Such actions, called an "unfair labor practice" strike by the National Labor Relations Board, typically last for a fixed duration and can be staged without going through the steps of bargaining that usually precede an open-ended strike, according to the unions.

L.A. Unified officials have denied wrongdoing.

Leaders of Local 99 recently declared an impasse in bargaining and are moving through the mediation and fact-finding process. The union, which has yet to settle wage issues dating to the 2020-21 school year, is seeking a 30% increase for all members, with an additional boost for the lowest-wage workers.

The teachers union is seeking a 20% raise over two years, starting with 10% for the current school year. The union bargaining platform is extensive, covering a number of workplace and social justice issues, including a commitment to extra resources for Black students and affordable housing for low-income families.

"I don't think we're going to have a strike," said board President Jackie Goldberg. "They're pressuring us. That's what unions do."

She noted that another bargaining session will take place Friday: "I think we have a basis of making an agreement with both of those unions, before any strike action is necessary."

Board member Tanya Ortiz Franklin said there's a lot at stake.

"We need more instructional time, not less, and our workers deserve to be well compensated," Franklin said. "Many of our SEIU members in particular are parents of our L.A. Unified students."

Man charged in sex app robberies

[**Grindr,** from B1]
his victims with a knife, prosecutors allege.

Ceballos said Patterson used a profile with a different person's picture to arrange hookups with men in their homes. Oftentimes, he'd tell his victims he needed to use their cellphones to watch porn to get aroused, Ceballos said. Once he had access to their phones, Patterson would use payment apps such as Venmo to send himself money or send money to the accounts of other victims whose phones he'd stolen, according to Ceballos.

"When the victims started getting alerts on their credit card, Venmo, PayPal, a lot of these transactions were being made through other victims," he said.

Sometimes Patterson would order the men to leave their doors unlocked and wait for him in a bedroom, then begin ransacking their homes. In cases in which victims realized Patterson's intentions were criminal rather than sexual, Ceballos said, he would threaten them or claim he had accomplices waiting outside who would lay waste to their homes if they didn't comply.

Ceballos filed a hate crime enhancement against Patterson, noting he would specifically target gay victims because he believed they were "soft targets" and sometimes used anti-gay slurs during the attacks. In some cases, Patterson would have sex with the victims and steal money by using their phones during intercourse, Ceballos said.

Federal prosecutors announced Patterson's arrest in April and laid out allegations involving 21 victims, but only five of those victims levied allegations that fell within federal jurisdiction, according to Thom Mrozek, a spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Los Angeles, who said his office worked closely with L.A. county prosecutors.

Patterson ultimately received a nine-year federal prison sentence as part of a plea deal. He was transferred out of federal custody to Los Angeles for an arraignment last week, where he pleaded not guilty. If convicted of all charges, he faces up to 60 years in prison, Ceballos said.

Ceballos also expressed frustration with Grindr. He said the app was not responsive after several victims raised safety concerns about Patterson's account and claimed that when police obtained a search warrant for information about Patterson's account, the app said it had nothing to turn over.

While he did not directly address Ceballos' complaints, a spokesman for Grindr said the company takes all reports of abuse seriously and cooperates with law enforcement.

"We encourage users to be careful when interacting with people they do not know," said the spokesman, Patrick Lenihan. "We encourage our users to report improper or illegal behavior either within the app."

Lottery results

Tonight's SuperLotto Plus
Jackpot: $41 million
Sales close at 7:45 p.m.

Tonight's Powerball Jackpot:
$63 million
Sales close at 7 p.m.

For Monday, March 13, 2023

Powerball
Powerball number is **bold**

3-10-24-46-63—**Powerball 4**
Jackpot: $52 million

California winners per category:

	No. of winners	Amount of prize(s)
5 + P-ball	0	—
5	0	—
4 + P-ball	1	$16,113
4	26	$309
3 + P-ball	55	$152
3	1,473	$6
2 + P-ball	1,135	$8
1 + P-ball	8,288	$5
P-ball only	19,026	$4

Winning jackpot ticket(s) sold in other states: None

For Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Mega Millions
Mega number is **bold**

1-7-23-38-55—**Mega 2**
Jackpot: $229 million

Fantasy Five: 4-6-17-30-33

Daily Four: 4-8-8-5

Daily Three (midday): 9-0-5

Daily Three (evening): 5-7-3

Daily Derby:
(6) Whirl Win
(7) Eureka
(2) Lucky Star
Race time: 1:49.94

Results on the internet:
www.latimes.com/lottery
General information:
(800) 568-8379
(Results not available at this number)

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Los Angeles Times

BERGER, Josephine

December 9, 1938 - March 13, 2023

Josephine Berger, age 84 of Calabasas, passed away on March 13th, 2023 at UCLA Santa Monica hospital.

Josie was born to parents Cecelia Bookman and Ralph Levy in Canada on December 9th, 1938.

She married the love of her life, Robert Leon Berger, on August 16th, 1959. She lived for her family and her grandchildren.

She was predeceased by her husband, Robert Leon Berger, her parents Celia and Ralph Levy, her sister Evelyn Morris, and brother, Harold Levy.

She left behind her three children Norine Vander Hooven, Elyssa Berger and Mark Berger, her son-in-law John Vander Hooven, her daughter-in-law Laurie Berger, her seven grandchildren Monique Moskowitz, Shira Lile, Dean Moskowitz, Ryan Vander Hooven, Matthew Vander Hooven and Cailee Vander Hooven, and Kayla Rosen, and her four great-grand children R.J Lile, Max Lile, Korah Moskowitz and Karlee Moskowitz.

Her funeral will take place at 10 am, Wednesday, March 15th at Eden Memorial Park in Mission Hills, California.

Josephine's family invites you to send flowers to the memorial park, or in lieu of flowers to send a donation to The Women's Jewish Federation in her honor.

CHARNEY, Renee Newman

Mount Sinai Memorial Parks
Hollywood Hills 800-600-0076
www.mountsinaiparks.org

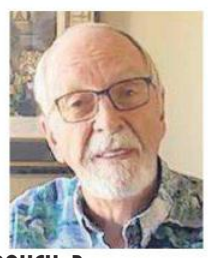
CHERRY, SR., Thomas William

February 20, 1939 - February 14, 2023

Thomas William Cherry, Sr. "Tom" passed away peacefully in Los Angeles on Tuesday, February 14. Tom was born and raised in Los Angeles, the youngest child of Helen Larkin Cherry and Dr. Creed Flanary Cherry. Tom attended Loyola High School, and Loyola University (now Loyola Marymount University) prior to embarking on a 35-year career in commercial banking that took him across the country. Tom was always proud of his association, Loyola High School and was a loyal Cub his entire life. He maintained close friendships with classmates from both Loyolas, as well as Cathedral Chapel elementary school, for his entire life. Tom was also very proud of his more than 25 years with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as a Reserve Deputy.

Tom was a beloved son, brother, father, and grandfather to his family. Tom is survived by his sister, Sally Catherine Cherry Dempsey, of Denver, Colorado and Rancho Mirage, California; and his children, son Tom Cherry, Jr. and wife Genelle Cherry, and granddaughters Caitlyn and Sloane; son John Cherry and wife Sheri Ungar, and grandchildren Jillian and Andrew; and daughter Michelle Cherry.

A funeral Mass will be held on Friday, March 17, at 11:00 AM at All Soul's Chapel at Calvary Cemetery, 4201 Whittier Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90023. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to a charity of your choice.



CROUCH, Bruce

April 24, 1938 - March 6, 2023

Bruce Crouch passed away peacefully on March 6, 2023, surrounded by family at home.

Bruce was born in Toronto, Canada, and lived there until the age of ten. The family moved to the Los Angeles area and settled in Whittier. His mother had been born in Scotland, and his father in Ireland.

After graduation from Whittier High, Bruce entered the US Army Reserves. He later graduated from Cal Poly Pomona College, and from there started a very successful lifetime career at Home Savings of America.

He enjoyed skiing, golf and world travel and as many have said, he never met a stranger. He was a sociable, fun-loving and charismatic individual. After his marriage to Marion in 1998, they later moved to Northern Nevada to enjoy golf and living in the beautiful Sierra Nevadas. He had lived in the Sunset Beach area of Southern California for many years up until that time.

He is survived by his wife Marion, her daughter Lisa, his daughter Cynthia, and grandsons Cody, Cameron, Luke and Robbie. He is also survived by his sister Mary and her husband Charles.

Bruce was greatly loved and will be missed by his family and many friends. There is an Irish saying, "In heaven, there is no beer. That's why we drink ours here." Cheers, dear Bruce. NFL.

GILBERT, Helen S.

September 5, 1926 - March 4, 2023

Helen lived a long and fruitful life and is remembered for her generosity, loving nature, and beautiful smile. She was born in Detroit, the daughter of Fredericka and "IR" Myers and the sister of Julian and Rodman. In 1946, she wed Gilbert J. Gilbert, and in 1954 they relocated to Encino to raise their five children: James, Peter, Clifford, Geoffrey, and Susan (all of whom survive her). She is also survived by six doted-upon grandchildren: Matthew, Christopher, Rebecca, Nora, Gabriel, and Mikaela. She lived to know her great-grandchildren: Levi and Phineas, and to anticipate another due shortly. Helen was a homemaker who was committed to her family and the community. She was a "mother" to all the kids in the neighborhood. Helen loved classical music, literature, and art. She advanced the arts and served five times as president of the PTA. She was active in the community as a volunteer docent at LACMA and the Skirball Cultural Center. Each week, she would read to young children at the local library. Her devotion to literature is further evidenced by the plaques engraved with her children's names in the Lanai Road School library. A memorial service for Helen will be held on March 19 at 2:00 p.m. at Mt. Sinai Memorial Park in Los Angeles. In lieu of flowers, the family asks for donations in her memory to The Alliance for Children's Rights.

LABOWE, Trana K.

October 24, 1930 - March 7, 2023

Trana K. Labowe was predeceased in life by her loving husband of 63-years, Ronald B. Labowe. They were childhood sweethearts, having met in junior high school at the age of 12.

Trana had a wonderful life. She was a native Los Angeleno, born in Boyle Heights, but grew up in Los Feliz and attended Marshall High School. She obtained a degree in physical therapy from Children's Hospital, Los Angeles and her Bachelor of Science degree from UCLA, where she was a proud member of the AEPhi sorority.

Trana and Ron moved to "the valley" in the mid-1950s and settled in on Cumpston St. where they became fast friends with other young families starting out in life. Everyone that grew up on Cumpston St. fondly refers to it as "the Old Block."

Trana and Ron were active in the Jewish community – members of Adat Ari El (formerly VJCC) for over 60 years and Havurah Ki Tov – and supporters of many Jewish organizations and causes over the decades, including assisting Russian Refuseniks immigrate to Israel.

Trana was passionate about the performing arts, and she shared this love with her family. Together with Ron, Trana was a Founder at the Los Angeles Music Center. Attending concerts and musicals were some of her greatest joys.

Trana loved the beach, especially Newport Beach and Maui, and traveled the world with Ron, their family and friends.

Her funeral will be held on Sunday, March 12, 2023 - 11:30am (PDST).

Mount Sinai Hollywood Hills
5950 Forest Lawn Dr
Los Angeles, CA 90068

Trana is survived by her four children, Mark (Lena), Ricky, Kenneth (Chantelle); and Sara; her eleven grandchildren - Jodi, Emily, Aaron (Rachel), Noah, Kaitlyn, Erik, Cece, Batsheva, Katya, Elijah and Jaden; and her great-grandson, Levi.

Sic Gloria Transit Mundi

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latimes.com/placeobituary
or call
1-800-234-4444
Los Angeles Times

MORELAND, Patricia Ann

Patricia Ann Moreland (Krause) passed away peacefully with family on March 4, 2023, at her home in San Marino, CA. She was born on September 9, 1938 to George and Ruth Krause in Spokane, Washington and was raised in Spokane and Wilbur, Washington.

Pat attended the University of Washington where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority and met her beloved husband, Donald Robert Moreland. They were married for 51 years before Don passed away in 2012.

Pat lived in Germany for three years while Don was commissioned in the U.S. Army. Afterwards, they relocated to California where she was a resident of San Marino for 50 years.

Pat was an active volunteer in the San Marino schools system for many years, PTA President and received multiple Community Service Awards. She was a Life Member of the Assistance League of Pasadena where she enjoyed helping seniors. She used her teaching skills when volunteering at the Huntington Library as a docent for over 30 years. She loved her friends in P.E.O. Chapter HM, the Pasadena Guild of the Huntington Hospital, The Town Club, Sustainers of the Pasadena Junior League, Pasadena Garden Club, and the Pasadena Alumnae Chapter of Kappa Alpha Theta.

Pat loved being active. She enjoyed playing tennis at Live Oaks Tennis Club, relaxing at the Jonathan Club, golfing at Annandale, planting flowers her garden, needlepoint, and her Book Club. She was never without a book. She had many wonderful trips around the world with her family and friends. In her later years, she enjoyed playing Mahjong and Bridge with her friends. She loved life and was a giver, modest and unassuming.

Pat's greatest love was her family. The times spent with her family brought her the most joy. She is survived by her adored sons and their families—Donald Robert, Jr. (D.R.) and his twins, Henry, and Tabitha; and Thomas Krause, his partner, Erin, his three children, Katelyn, Tommy and Spencer and her daughters, Avery, and Emma. She is survived by her only brother whom she loved, Joel Krause and his wife, Rola. She also leaves behind her niece Amy Ritchy and her family, and her nephews Joel and Paul and his family.

Pat was graceful with tremendous strength and had a heart of gold. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

Funeral arrangements have been made through Cabot and Sons, 27 Chestnut St. Pasadena, CA 91103.

Funeral Services will be held on Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 11:00 am at St. Therese Catholic Church, 510 N. El Molino St. (Alhambra Road) in Alhambra, CA.

Her final resting place will be at the Sherman Cemetery in Wilbur, WA at a date TBD.

Memorial donations may be made to the Huntington Library Botanical Gardens at www.huntington.org in memory of Pat.

Share a memory
To sign a guest book please go to latimes.com/guestbooks
Los Angeles Times

THE WEATHER

Today in Southern California

Drying out: The atmospheric river and jet stream will weaken and slide to the south today, allowing for drying after pockets of rain early. Thursday will remain on the cool side of historical average despite intervals of sunshine. A disturbance will ride the jet stream on Friday and could direct some rain back across the region, mainly in the afternoon.

5-day forecasts

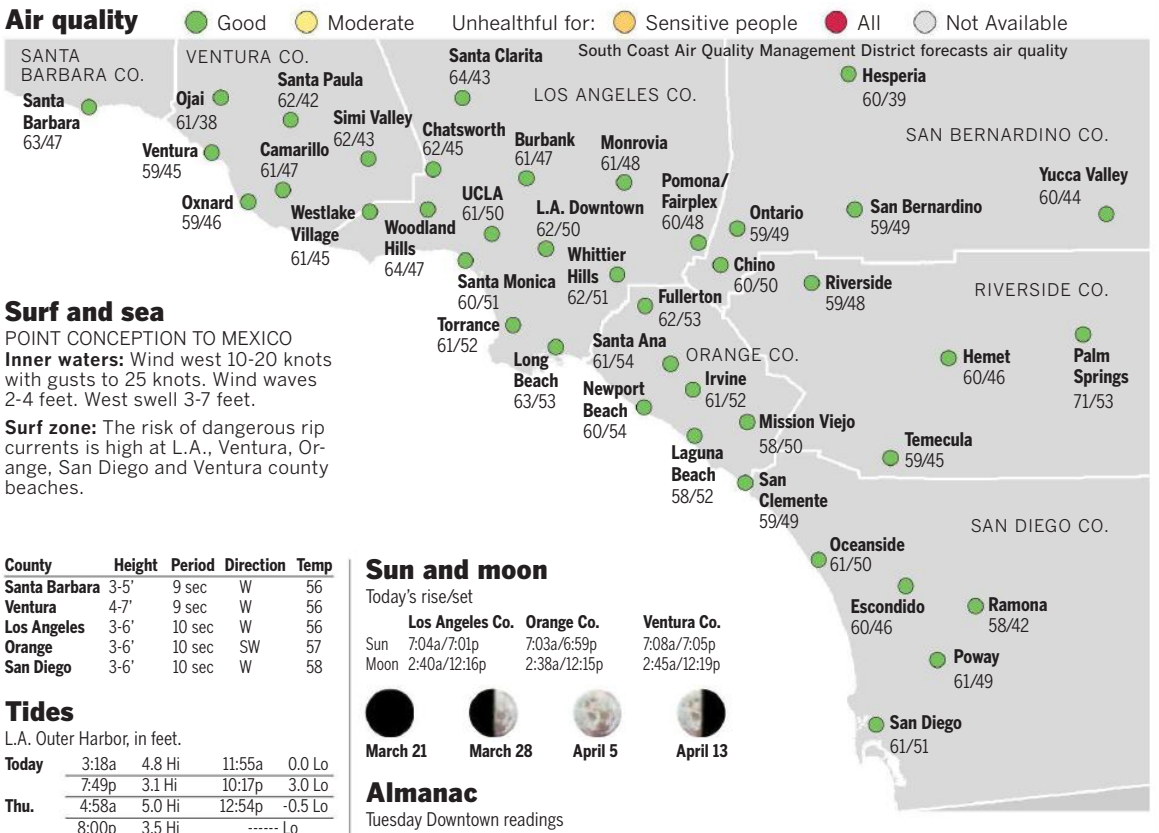
High/low temperatures are average forecasts for entire zone.

	L.A. Basin		Valleys		Beaches		Mountains		Deserts	
Today	62|50		62|45		60|51		43|27		71|53	
	Showers around		Showers around		Showers around		Cloudy and chilly		Showers around	
Thursday	Partly sunny	62/50	Some sun	64/46	Some sun	61/48	Mostly sunny	44/26	Mostly sunny	76/55
Friday	A shower	61/51	A shower	61/48	A few showers	60/50	Cold	42/31	Partly sunny	74/56
Saturday	Some sun	65/52	Clearing	65/48	Some sun	61/50	Showers	46/31	Some sun	77/56
Sunday	Mostly cloudy	64/53	A p.m. shower	66/46	Mostly cloudy	60/50	A p.m. shower	45/25	Some sun	76/56

Air quality

Good · Moderate · Unhealthful for: Sensitive people · All · Not Available

South Coast Air Quality Management District forecasts air quality



Surf and sea

POINT CONCEPTION TO MEXICO

Inner waters: Wind west 10-20 knots with gusts to 25 knots. Wind waves 2-4 feet. West swell 3-7 feet.

Surf zone: The risk of dangerous rip currents is high at L.A., Ventura, Orange, San Diego and Ventura county beaches.

County	Height	Period	Direction	Temp
Santa Barbara	3-5'	9 sec	W	56
Ventura	4-7'	9 sec	W	56
Los Angeles	3-6'	10 sec	W	56
Orange	3-6'	10 sec	SW	57
San Diego	3-6'	10 sec	W	58

Tides

L.A. Outer Harbor, in feet.

Today	3:18a	4.8 Hi	11:55a	0.0 Lo
	7:49p	3.1 Hi	10:17p	3.0 Lo
Thu.	4:58a	5.0 Hi	12:54p	-0.5 Lo
	8:00p	3.5 Hi	-----	Lo

UV index

Minutes to burn for sensitive people

Las Vegas, 60 · Phoenix, 60
Los Angeles, 60 · San Francisco, 45

Sun and moon

Today's rise/set

	Los Angeles Co.	Orange Co.	Ventura Co.
Sun	7:04a/7:01p	7:03a/6:59p	7:08a/7:05p
Moon	2:40a/12:16p	2:38a/12:15p	2:45a/12:19p

March 21 · March 28 · April 5 · April 13

Almanac

Tuesday Downtown readings

Temperature	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
High/low	60/56	61/58	56/54
Normal high/low	70/52	71/52	66/46
High/low a year ago	71/54	77/50	64/51
Record high/date	93/2015	96/2015	91/2015
Record low/date	39/1895	39/2006	32/1990

Precipitation	Los Angeles	Fullerton	Ventura
24-hour total (as of 5 p.m.)	0.66	0.21	1.57
Season total (since Oct. 1)	21.63	15.42	20.93
Last season (Oct. 1 to date)	10.50	5.67	9.54
Season norm (Oct. 1 to date)	12.04	9.99	13.43
Humidity (high/low)	96/86	90/80	100/96

California cities

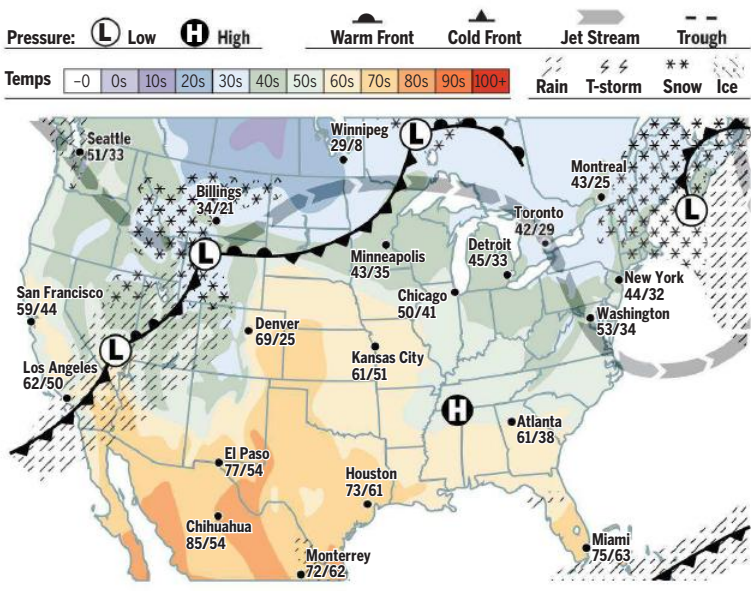
City	Tuesday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Thursday Hi	Lo
Anaheim	60	56	.29	61	51	65	51
Avalon/Catalina	57	50	--	58	46	55	47
Bakersfield	72	56	.06	63	45	65	47
Barstow	67	54	.01	69	45	67	44
Big Bear Lake	44	32	.57	43	27	44	26
Bishop	50	32	.07	57	28	55	29
Burbank	57	54	.33	61	47	62	49
Camarillo	59	54	1.07	61	47	65	52
Chatsworth	56	53	.71	62	45	63	46
Chino	59	51	.41	60	50	65	48
Compton	58	55	.46	62	52	64	50
Dana Point	60	53	.17	58	51	60	52
Death Valley	73	66	--	72	60	76	57
Del Mar	62	52	.06	58	47	59	47
Escondido	69	53	.04	60	46	63	45
Eureka	47	45	.98	54	31	53	41
Fallbrook	63	52	.04	59	47	64	47
Fresno	64	55	.52	63	44	65	44
Fullerton	61	58	.21	62	53	65	52
Hemet	58	48	.08	60	46	62	43
Hesperia	64	50	xx	60	39	61	38
Huntington Beach	61	56	.30	60	53	62	52
Idyllwild	48	37	.30	47	37	51	38
Irvine	60	55	.28	61	52	64	52

City	Tuesday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Thursday Hi	Lo
L.A. D'ntown/USC	60	55	.66	62	50	62	50
L.A. Int'l. Airport	59	55	.53	60	52	60	49
Laguna Beach	61	55	.17	58	52	60	53
Lancaster	58	52	Tr	62	39	63	44
Long Beach	63	58	.39	63	53	64	51
Mammoth Lakes	37	28	.57	43	18	40	20
Mission Viejo	59	52	.28	58	50	63	50
Monrovia	57	52	.08	61	48	64	49
Monterey	66	54	.33	55	42	59	47
Mt. Wilson	44	38	--	41	34	41	36
Needles	76	56	.02	70	50	72	49
Newport Beach	61	54	.15	60	54	60	53
Northridge	56	53	.80	64	46	64	47
Oakland	62	56	.50	59	42	61	44
Oceanside	64	50	.06	61	50	63	49
Ojai	57	54	1.44	61	38	64	46
Ontario	58	51	.36	59	49	62	48
Palm Springs	73	61	--	71	53	76	55
Pasadena	57	54	--	61	47	61	46
Paso Robles	58	54	.86	63	38	65	40
Redding	58	49	2.75	63	41	65	41
Riverside	58	49	.19	59	48	61	44
Sacramento	65	55	.56	62	37	63	41
San Bernardino	61	53	.74	59	49	62	45

City	Tuesday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Thursday Hi	Lo
San Diego	66	54	.02	61	51	62	52
San Francisco	64	54	.71	59	44	61	47
San Gabriel	xx	xx	--	62	49	65	50
San Jose	65	56	.31	61	40	63	44
San Luis Obispo	60	56	1.97	59	41	64	46
Santa Ana	62	56	.24	61	54	64	54
Santa Barbara	59	56	2.08	63	47	61	49
Santa Clarita	55	52	.42	64	43	66	45
Santa Monica Pier	58	53	.53	60	51	61	48
Santa Paula	57	54	1.55	62	42	63	48
Santa Rosa	58	54	2.09	63	34	62	40
Simi Valley	55	52	.78	62	43	64	47
Tahoe Valley	42	36	.33	43	17	42	24
Temecula	63	51	.02	59	45	63	45
Thousand Oaks	55	53	.84	61	45	63	48
Torrance	57	55	.72	61	52	60	50
UCLA	xx	xx	--	61	50	61	51
Van Nuys	60	55	.47	64	48	66	49
Ventura	56	54	1.57	59	45	59	50
Whittier Hills	59	56	.36	62	51	64	50
Woodland Hills	57	51	.38	64	47	63	47
Wrightwood	47	41	.50	47	36	49	35
Yorba Linda	60	55	.41	59	50	65	50
Yosemite Valley	41	34	1.12	52	29	53	28

Today in North America

Wind and snow in New England: High winds accompanied by snow and flurries will continue across New England. Many places in the Southeast will have frost or a freeze to start. Rain and snow associated with the latest atmospheric river will slide eastward into the Rockies.



U.S. cities

TUESDAY'S EXTREMES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES

High 85 in Miami, Fla.

Low –17 in Land O Lakes, Wis.

City	Tuesday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Albany	35	33	1.81	41	23	Sf
Albuquerque	62	32	.01	63	42	Cy
Anchorage	23	6	--	25	23	Su
Aspen	47	19	--	45	25	Sn
Atlanta	51	31	--	61	38	Su
Austin	67	46	--	75	62	Pc
Baltimore	44	34	Tr	52	30	W
Boise	48	42	.23	48	25	Cy
Boston	41	40	2.17	43	34	Sf
Buffalo	29	24	.05	37	29	Pc
Burlington, Vt.	34	32	.99	39	24	Sf
Charleston, S.C.	59	37	--	60	35	Su
Charlotte	50	30	--	58	32	Su
Chicago	38	21	Tr	50	41	Pc
Cincinnati	38	28	Tr	51	32	Su
Cleveland	30	25	.02	43	34	Su
Columbia, S.C.	55	35	Tr	61	32	Su
Columbus	33	24	Tr	49	30	Su
Dallas/Ft.Worth	63	39	Tr	68	60	Pc
Denver	63	35	--	69	25	Cy
Detroit	36	20	.01	45	33	Su
El Paso	76	51	--	77	54	Cy
Eugene	49	32	Tr	52	31	Pc
Fort Myers	84	66	--	72	54	Cy
Hartford	36	33	1.82	44	29	Sf
Honolulu	83	75	.17	85	74	Sh
Houston	67	50	--	73	61	Su
Indianapolis	39	23	.03	50	35	Pc
Jacksonville, Fla.	66	44	--	61	36	Su
Kansas City	48	20	--	61	51	Pc
Knoxville	44	33	--	53	28	Su
Las Vegas	67	57	.12	68	49	Sh
Louisville	45	31	Tr	54	36	Su
Medford	40	38	.70	56	29	Cy
Memphis	49	30	--	58	45	Su
Miami	85	71	--	75	63	Sh
Milwaukee	33	19	--	48	40	Cy
Minneapolis	31	11	--	43	35	Cy
Nashville	46	35	--	56	36	Pc
New Orleans	62	48	.05	66	51	Su
New York	36	35	.55	44	32	W
Norfolk	50	36	Tr	54	37	W
Oklahoma City	53	31	--	64	56	W
Omaha	46	15	--	63	37	Hz
Orlando	74	53	--	68	48	Pc
Philadelphia	41	35	Tr	49	32	W
Phoenix	80	55	--	65	55	Sh
Pittsburgh	28	23	.04	44	27	Su
Portland, Ore.	55	36	.04	52	34	Sh
Providence	43	39	2.58	45	32	Sf
Raleigh/Durham	51	31	--	57	29	Su
Reno	61	43	.23	50	26	Pc
Richmond	50	33	.01	54	28	Su
St. Louis	43	30	--	60	45	Pc
Salt Lake City	61	42	.02	48	28	Sh

City	Tuesday Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Today Hi	Lo	Sky
Seattle	51	35	Tr	51	33	Pc
Tampa	76	58	--	69	50	Sh
Tucson	80	50	--	70	53	Cy
Tulsa	55	33	--	64	55	W
Washington, D.C.	45	36	Tr	53	34	W
Wichita	55	28	--	65	54	W

World

City	Hi	Lo	Prcp.	Hi	Lo	Sky
Acapulco	86	71	--	86	68	Su
Amsterdam	45	43	1.05	47	37	Pc
Athens	66	46	--	63	50	Ts
Bangkok	91	75	--	94	77	Cy
Barcelona	72	57	--	62	49	Pc
Berlin	57	52	.39	44	30	Sh
Cabo San Lucas	90	58	--	85	65	Su
Cairo	70	57	.02	70	56	Su
Dubai	86	75	--	87	73	Pc
Dublin	43	32	.07	49	47	R
Havana	88	66	.05	82	61	Sh
Ho Chi Minh City	93	73	--	94	75	Cy
Hong Kong	74	60	--	77	68	Pc
Istanbul	52	43	--	58	49	Pc
Jerusalem	54	52	.75	53	45	R
Johannesburg	80	53	--	79	55	Pc
Kuala Lumpur	91	75	--	97	74	Cy
Lima	81	71	.06	82	72	Cy
London	48	41	.24	48	44	Pc
Madrid	63	46	--	70	39	Su
Mecca	96	72	.02	88	64	R
Mexico City	78	52	.04	72	50	Ts
Montreal	37	32	.29	43	25	Cy
Moscow	41	23	.20	43	35	Pc
Mumbai	97	82	--	93	81	Hz
New Delhi	90	66	--	91	68	Hz
Paris	52	46	.37	52	40	Pc
Prague	54	46	.30	43	25	Sn
Rome	61	52	.16	65	42	Pc
Seoul	59	34	--	55	25	Pc
Singapore	84	75	--	88	76	Pc
Taipei City	75	57	--	80	63	Pc
Tokyo	54	41	--	61	50	Su
Vancouver	48	36	.03	48	33	Su
Vienna	61	43	.13	50	33	W

Key: **Su** sunny; **Pc** partly cloudy; **Cy** cloudy; **Fg** foggy; **Prcp** precipitation; **Dr** drizzle; **Hz** hazy **Sh** showers; **Ts** thunderstorms; **R** rain; **Sn** snow; **Sf** snow flurries; **I** ice; **Rs** rain/snow; **W** windy; **Tr** trace. **Notes:** National extremes exclude Alaska and Hawaii. Missing data indicated by "xx". Tuesday's readings as of 5 p.m.

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Alcaraz cruises into quarterfinals

Men's No. 2 earns 101st ATP Tour victory. Gauff, Swiatek also win at Indian Wells.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carlos Alcaraz is three victories away from returning to the world's top ranking, having reached the quarterfinals of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells on Tuesday.

Alcaraz, ranked No. 2, advanced when Jack Draper retired with the Spaniard leading 6-2, 2-0 after 46 minutes of play. It was Alcaraz's 101st ATP Tour victory.

"I would say I returned well, I hit great shots," Alcaraz said. "I finished the match with confidence in my shots, to come into the next round with more confidence."

Draper was affected by an abdominal injury. The injury hampered his serve, which dropped well below 100 mph, and his movement. A trainer visited him between sets and Draper won just one point in the first two games of the second set before quitting.

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek moved on with a 6-3, 6-1 victory over Emma Raducanu.

Coco Gauff rallied from a break down in the third set to beat Swedish qualifier Rebecca Peterson, 6-3, 1-6, 6-4 and reach the quarterfinals.

Down 2-4, Gauff fought back and saved three break points while serving at 4-all before closing out the match in the next game.

Four years ago, Peterson routed a 14-year-old Gauff at a Challenger tournament in Michigan.

"She whooped me really bad," Gauff said on court. "I think today was really a mental thing, just staying in the match. I wasn't playing my best in some moments and I wasn't serving as well as I'd like to, but I think that my mentality kept me in."

The sixth-seeded American next plays No. 2 seed Aryna Sabalenka, who beat 16th-seeded Barbora Krejcikova, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

No. 3 Jessica Pegula lost to 15th-seeded Petra Kvitova 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (11) after the American blew four match points

Sorana Cirstea took out No. 5 Caroline Garcia 6-4, 4-6, 7-5, No. 7 Maria Sakkari beat 17th-seeded Karolina Pliskova 6-4, 5-7, 6-3, and No. 10 Elena Rybakina defeated Varvara Gracheva 6-3, 6-0.

On the men's side, defending champion Taylor Fritz moved into the quarters with a 6-4, 6-3 win over Marton Fucsovics.

No. 5 Daniil Medvedev overcame a swollen right ankle and outlasted 12th-seeded Alexander Zverev, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (5), 7-5.

Zverev added to the drama by saving a match point and breaking for 5-5 in the final set. Medvedev broke right back and went on to win.

He next plays Spain's Alejandro Davidovch Fokina, who beat Cristian Garin 6-3, 6-4.

No. 10 Cameron Norrie beat sixth-seeded Andrey Rublev, 6-2, 6-4 and will face Frances Tiafoe.

TENNIS RESULTS

$8.8-MILLION BNP PARIBAS OPEN
At Indian Wells Tennis Garden
Surface: Hard-outdoor

MEN'S SINGLES (fourth round)—Alejandro Davidovich Fokina (23), Spain, d. Cristian Garin, Chile, 6-3, 6-4; Daniil Medvedev (5), Russia, d. Alexander Zverev (12), Germany, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (5), 7-5; Cameron Norrie (10), Britain, d. Andrey Rublev (6), Russia, 6-2, 6-4; Taylor Fritz (4), d. Marton Fucsovics, Hungary, 6-4, 6-3; Carlos Alcaraz (1), Spain, d. Jack Draper, Britain, 6-2, 2-0, retired; Frances Tiafoe (14), d. Alejandro Tabilo, Chile, 6-4, 6-4.

WOMEN'S SINGLES (fourth round)—Coco Gauff (6), d. Rebecca Peterson, Sweden, 6-3, 1-6, 6-4; Maria Sakkari (7), Greece, d. Karolina Pliskova (17), Czech Republic, 6-4, 5-7, 6-3; Aryna Sabalenka (2), Belarus, d. Barbora Krejcikova (16), Czech Republic, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4; Aryna Sabalenka (2), Belarus, d. Barbora Krejcikova (16), Czech Republic, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4; Frances Tiafoe (14), d. Alejandro Tabilo, Chile, 6-4, 6-4; Karolina Muchova, Czech Republic, d. Marketa Vondrousova, Czech Republic, 6-4, 6-7 (2), 6-4 (40); Petra Kvitova (15), Czech Republic, d. Jessica Pegula (3), 6-2, 3-6, 7-6 (11); Elena Rybakina (10), Kazakhstan, d. Varvara Gracheva, Russia, 6-3, 6-0; Sorana Cirstea, Romania, d. Caroline Garcia (5), France, 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.

WOMEN'S DOUBLES (second round)—Storm Hunter, Australia-Elise Mertens (6), Belgium, d. Danielle Collins and Peyton Stearns, 6-4, 6-4; Shuko Aoyama-Ena Shibahara, Japan, d. Nicole Melichar-Martinez, and Ellen Perez (8), Australia, 3-6, 6-4, 10-8; Gabriela Dabrowski, Canada-Luisa Stefani, Brazil, d. Alexa Guarachi Mathison, Chile-Erin Routliffe, New Zealand, 6-3, 6-4.

Rolling Kings go on power trip

L.A., 6-0-1 in its last seven games, has a four-goal outburst in the second period.

KINGS 5
N.Y. ISLANDERS 2

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Drew Doughty and Alex Iafallo scored on the power play as part of a four-goal outburst in the second period, and the Kings defeated the New York Islanders 5-2 on Tuesday night.

Blake Lizotte, Trevor Moore and Quinton Byfield also scored for Los Angeles. Joonas Korpisalo made 26 saves, and the Kings improved to 6-0-1 in their last seven games.

"They're more committed, they're more calculated with the risk that they're willing to take on the ice. And lo and behold, they're scoring more, so it's working well that way right now," Kings coach Todd McLellan said.

JAE C. HONG Associated Press

NEW YORK'S Alexander Romanov checks the Kings' Adrian Kempe during the second period.

Pierre Engvall and Jean-Gabriel Pageau each had a goal, but the Islanders have dropped their last two games following three straight wins as part of a five-game points streak. Ilya Sorokin allowed four goals on 36 shots.

The Kings took charge on special teams after the Islanders lost their composure early in the second when Matt Martin was penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct after throwing a helmet during a scrum. Following a subsequent kneeing call against Zach Parise, Doughty buried a one-timer set up by Anze Kopitar during the five-on-three power play for a 2-1 lead.

Iafallo made it 3-1 one minute later, tapping in the rebound after Viktor Arvidsson hit the post for his 10th goal of the season.

"We just got a little sharper, a little faster," McLellan said of the two-for-two showing with the man advantage.

That was enough for the Kings to continue their home-ice dominance, posting a 10-3-1 record since the start of 2023.

KINGS 5, ISLANDERS 2

N.Y. Islanders	1	1	0	– 2
KINGS	0	4	1	– 5

FIRST PERIOD: 1. N.Y. Islanders, Engvall 14 (Pulock), 11:45. **Penalties**—None.

SECOND PERIOD: 2. KINGS, Lizotte 10 (Vilardi, Walker), 1:54. 3. KINGS, Doughty 4 (Kopitar, Kempe), 6:06 (pp). 4. KINGS, Iafallo 10 (Arvidsson, Kaliyev), 7:06 (pp). 5. KINGS, Moore 8 (Danault, Gavrikov), 12:14. 6. N.Y. Islanders, Pageau 11 (Aho, Pulock), 17:02. **Penalties**—Kupari, KINGS (Roughing), 4:40. Romanov, N.Y.I (Roughing), 4:40. Martin, N.Y.I (Unsportsmanlike Conduct), 4:40. Parise, N.Y.I (Kneeing), 5:10. Byfield, KINGS (Interference), 15:00.

THIRD PERIOD: 7. KINGS, Byfield 3 (Gavrikov, Roy), 19:07 (en). **Penalties**—Gavrikov, KINGS (Hooking), 4:09. Byfield, KINGS (Delay of Game), 16:58.

SHOTS ON GOAL: N.Y. Islanders 12-6-10–28. KINGS 14-12-11–37. Power-play conversions—N.Y. Islanders 0 of 3. KINGS 2 of 2.

GOALIES: N.Y. Islanders, Sorokin 23-19-6 (36 shots-32 saves). KINGS, Korpisalo 14-11-3 (28-26). Att—15,989 (18,230). T—2:26.

NHL STANDINGS

Sixteen teams qualify for the Stanley Cup playoffs. The format is a set bracket that is largely division-based with wild cards. The top three teams in each division will make up the first 12 teams in the playoffs. The remaining four spots will be filled by the next two highest-placed finishers in each conference, based on regular-season record and regardless of division.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Vegas	42	20	6	90	222	188
KINGS	39	20	9	87	233	223
Edmonton	37	23	8	82	264	231
Seattle	37	23	7	81	234	216
Calgary	30	24	14	74	212	209
Vancouver	29	32	5	63	227	255
DUCKS	22	35	10	54	172	271
San Jose	19	36	13	51	198	263
Central	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
Dallas	37	18	13	87	236	185
Minnesota	38	21	8	84	195	178
Colorado	37	22	6	80	214	185
Winnipeg	38	27	3	79	213	194
Nashville	34	24	7	75	188	190
St. Louis	29	32	5	63	205	242
Arizona	25	32	11	61	192	240
Chicago	23	38	6	52	171	239

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Metropolitan	W	L	OL	Pts	GF	GA
Carolina	44	14	8	96	222	168
New Jersey	44	17	6	94	236	181
N.Y. Rangers	38	19	10	86	222	189
Pittsburgh	34	23	10	78	221	216
N.Y. Islanders	34	27	8	76	198	192
Washington	32	29	7	71	211	205
Philadelphia	24	32	11	59	172	222
Columbus	21	38	7	49	175	249
Atlantic	**W**	**L**	**OL**	**Pts**	**GF**	**GA**
x-Boston	50	11	5	105	248	148
Toronto	40	18	8	88	226	179
Tampa Bay	40	22	6	86	237	207
Florida	33	27	7	73	229	226
Buffalo	33	28	5	71	242	239
Ottawa	33	30	4	70	210	218
Detroit	30	28	9	69	200	219
Montreal	27	35	6	60	190	248

Note: Overtime or shootout losses worth one point.

x-clinched playoff berth

RESULTS

AT KINGS 5 N.Y. ISLANDERS 2	The Kings scored four second-period goals on the way to improving to 6-0-1 in their last seven games.
VEGAS 5 AT PHILADELPHIA 3	Jonathan Quick tied John Vanbiesbrouck for second on the career wins list among American goalies with 374.
AT N.Y. RANGERS 5 WASHINGTON 3	Mika Zibanejad scored twice in the first period for the Rangers. Patrick Kane had a goal and an assist.
TAMPA BAY 4 AT NEW JERSEY 1	Brandon Hagel had a goal and two assists, and the Lightning scored the last four goals in their victory.
AT CAROLINA 5 WINNIPEG 3	The Hurricanes' Jesperi Kotkaniemi had two goals and an assist, and Jack Drury scored his first goal of the season.
MONTREAL 6 AT PITTSBURGH 4	Anthony Richard scored the winning goal in the third period, and the Canadiens ended their skid at seven.
AT NASHVILLE 2 DETROIT 1	Kiefer Sherwood had a goal and an assist, Juuse Saros made 28 saves, and the Predators won a third straight.
AT CHICAGO 6 BOSTON 3	Taylor Raddysh scored three goals for the Blackhawks, who sent the Bruins to a second straight regulation loss.
AT EDMONTON 6 OTTAWA 3	Leon Draisaitl scored twice to reach 100 points for the season, and Connor McDavid added a goal and an assist.
AT VANCOUVER 5 DALLAS 2	Anthony Beauvillier scored midway through the second period, and the Canucks earned their fifth victory in a row.
AT ARIZONA 4 CALGARY 3 (OT)	Travis Boyd scored the winning overtime goal for the Coyotes, and Clayton Keller finished with two goals.
COLUMBUS 6 AT SAN JOSE 5 (OT)	Johnny Gaudreau scored two goals, including the winner in overtime, and had three assists for the Blue Jackets.

TODAY'S GAMES

N.Y. Islanders at DUCKS, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Washington, 4 p.m.
Colorado at Toronto, 4 p.m.
Minnesota at St. Louis, 6:30 p.m.

THE DAY IN SPORTS

Freeman exits WBC game with leg injury

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Dodgers first baseman **Freddie Freeman**, playing for Canada in the World Baseball Classic, left its win Tuesday over Colombia with a hamstring injury.

Freeman ran gingerly out of the batter's box after popping out to the third baseman in foul territory in the top of the third inning. He was replaced at first base in the bottom of the fourth.

Canada manager **Ernie Whitt** described it as "tightness" in the hamstring. He said the 2020 National League most valuable player sustained the injury on one of his swings during the at-bat in the third inning.

The injury isn't believed to be serious, but Freeman will be further evaluated Wednesday. He's not expected to play Canada's Pool C finale against Mexico on Wednesday. Canada would reach the quarterfinals in Miami with a win.

"I don't foresee Freddie being in for tomorrow," Whitt said. "We're waiting from the doctors to see what they say and also the Dodgers. Again, that's the most important thing — is his health."

— Jorge Castillo

Eugenio Suárez and **Anthony Santander** had two hits each as Venezuela beat Nicaragua 4-1 in the WBC. Venezuela clinched Pool D and reached the quarterfinals when the Dominican Republic defeated Israel 10-7 behind **Manny Machado's** homer and three RBIs. ... **Otto Lopez** hit a three-run homer and Canada beat Colombia 5-0. ... **Alexis Wilson** had the go-ahead single in the seventh that helped Mexico edge Britain 2-1. ... Former major leaguer **Yoenis Céspedes** left the Cuban team for personal reasons.

The long-running fight between the Baltimore Orioles and Washington Nationals over television rights fees reached New York's highest court. A lawyer for the Orioles argued a $296.8-million award in favor of the Nationals made by a panel of baseball executives should be thrown out and the case reheard by a different forum. ... Left-hander **José Quintana** won't make his New York Mets debut until at least July because of a stress fracture in his rib.

Godofredo A. Vásquez Associated Press

COLOMBIA first baseman Reynaldo Rodriguez tries to tag Canada's Edouard Julien in the first inning of their World Baseball Classic game. Canada won 5-0.

BOXING

Álvarez returns to ring in May

Canelo Álvarez will return to the ring May 6 in his native Guadalajara, Mexico, to defend his four super middleweight belts against Britain's **John Ryder**.

Álvarez (58-2-2, 39 knockouts) is fighting for the first time since he won the final bout in his trilogy with **Gennady Golovkin** in September.

ETC.

FIFA increases World Cup size

FIFA, the governing body of soccer, increased the size of the 2026 World Cup tournament for the second time — six years after the first — by approving a bigger group stage for the inaugural 48-team event. FIFA created a 104-game schedule that will last nearly six weeks in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

The 16 host cities — 11 in the United States, three in Mexico and two in Canada — now have 24 extra games to stage on top of the 80 they already had for the inaugural 48-team tournament.

Diamond Sports Group, the largest owner of regional sports networks, including 19 under the Bally Sports banner, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. The move came after it missed a $140-million interest payment last month.

The Cleveland Cavaliers signed guard **Sam Merrill** to a multiyear contract. ... Milwaukee became the first team to clinch a playoff spot, beating Phoenix 116-104.

USA Swimming will reward its athletes financially if the Americans sweep all seven relays at this summer's world championships and the 2024 Paris Olympics. ... The doping ban that caused Olympic gymnastics champion **Oleg Verniaiev** to miss the Tokyo Games was halved at the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which freed him to compete immediately.

Carolina Hurricanes forward **Andrei Svechnikov** is out for the remainder of the season and the playoffs because of a torn ligament in his right knee. Svechnikov will undergo reconstruction surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament Thursday. ... Washington star **Alex Ovechkin** missed the Capitals' game against the New York Rangers because of a lower-body injury.

Ryan Redington won the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, bringing his six dogs off the Bering Sea ice to the finish line on Nome's main street in his 16th try. Redington, 40, is the grandson of **Joe Redington Sr.**, who helped co-found the race.

Pitching in earned Modami great gig

[**Modami,** from B10]

superstar center fielder and left-hander Aaron Loup are the two Angels on Team USA's roster for the World Baseball Classic. But they aren't the only people representing the organization on the American squad.

Modami also left the Angels last week to join Team USA as a batting practice pitcher, which, by definition, makes him one of the best at what he does in this country too.

"Guys love the way he throws it in there," Team USA and Dodgers third base coach Dino Ebel said. "And he's left-handed. That's rare."

Modami, 42, is a former ballplayer himself. Born in New York City, he moved to Scottsdale in high school and played baseball at Oklahoma State. He hit .267 with a home run in 86 at-bats his senior year. A short indy-ball career followed. His playing days ended in 2005.

"I played hard," Modami said. "Loved the game. Short on talent. I was good, but I couldn't forget an 0 for 4. My 0 for 4 would be an 0 for 12."

To stay in baseball, he started regularly going to a training facility in the Phoenix area, where he ended up throwing batting practice to major leaguers. One was Pat Burrell, a slugger with the Philadelphia Phillies at the time. Eventually, Modami found out the Phillies needed a batting practice pitcher. He flew out there for a tryout and was given the job.

He spent five years with the Phillies before Jayson Werth, who left Philadelphia for the Nationals, brought him to Washington. Modami threw thousands of pitches for the Nationals for nine years. In 2021, with a push from Anthony Rendon — who had left Washington the previous year — Modami joined the Angels.

"I don't like hitting left-handed BP throwers," said Team USA shortstop Trea Turner, who spent parts of five seasons hitting pitches off Modami in Washington. "Him and [former Nationals hitting coach] Kevin Long are the only two left-handers that I've ever really liked hitting off of.

"It's just a perfect four-seam, and he wants to be great out there. He wants to prepare you, and he puts in the effort. So, it's nice when you have somebody that cares. And he's a good dude. Everyone loves him."

Modami said all that time spent with players leads to trust. He's not their hitting coach, but he sees thousands of swings. He can tell whether something is wrong, so he's frequently asked for input. It becomes part of the job. One day, he said, he would like more responsibility — maybe as an assistant hitting coach.

Team USA manager Mark DeRosa first met Modami as a player in 2012, his only season with the Nationals — the 15th of his 16-year career. Injuries limited DeRosa to 48 games and plenty of rehabilitation time in the cage with Modami. A friendship was forged.

Last year, DeRosa, an MLB Network analyst in his first stint as a manager, pushed for Modami to be invited to join Team USA. In November, Modami got the call from Team USA general manager Tony Reagins.

"He was unbelievable," DeRosa said.

The game has evolved during Modami's time in the majors. Players' game plans are more tailored than before, and they step into the batter's box with specific requests. Pitchers are throwing harder than ever, so hitters want more velocity in batting practice to prepare. That means Modami moving closer to simulate the speed or players opting for a throwing machine.

"But some guys don't like the machine because of the timing factor," Modami said. "They like to see the arm stroke. So it's just a little bit of both. Some days you throw a couple hundred pitches. Some days 300. It just depends."

All those pitches — thousands and thousands over 15 years — have taken a toll. Modami said he didn't need any arm care until 2017. His arm never hurt. Then it did. So trainers gave him a program he still uses. He lifts light weights or uses bands for strength training one day and ices his arm the next throughout the season. The treatment erased the pain.

"It's funny," Modami said. "I played first base. We don't throw at all, and my arm hurt every day. Now it never hurts."

Modami has thrown to some of the biggest stars in the majors. Bryce Harper and Shohei Ohtani have put on batting practice shows with his pitches. Others used the pregame sessions to hit the ball to particular areas. Ryan Howard liked hitting ground balls to shortstop. Daniel Murphy always tried to rip one line drive up the middle.

Modami's consistency and durability led to an opportunity he never imagined possible, throwing batting practice for the greatest group of American position players ever assembled for an international event and a certain superstar he grew up revering minutes from where the journey started. He has been a member of two World Series teams in his career — one each with Philadelphia and Washington. Another championship is within reach this month.

"To wear this uniform," Modami said, "is a dream come true."

Ross D. Franklin Associated Press

DODGERS OUTFIELDER James Outman has nine hits in 23 at-bats this spring, including four for extra bases — two of which have gone for homers — and has driven in eight runs as he hopes to make the club.

Outman has been a hit so far as he battles for spot on roster

[**Dodgers,** from B10]

Outman closed the campaign on a tear, posting a .293 batting average, 1.018 on-base-plus-slugging percentage and 15 home runs in triple A, while hitting for two cycles within the span of a week.

He finished with 31 homers and 106 RBIs in 125 games.

That strong finish has carried over to the spring.

In 23 Cactus League at-bats, Outman has nine hits — four for extra bases, two of them no-doubt homers. He has driven in eight runs. And he has struck out only six times, adding three walks for an on-base-percentage of nearly .500.

In live batting practice Monday, his streak continued. Evan Phillips, Caleb Ferguson and Daniel Hudson all turned and watched Outman take one of their pitches deep.

"My second time facing hitters in eight months," joked Hudson, who recently returned from a torn anterior cruciate ligament, "and they got me facing Babe Ruth over here."

And there's still a chance Outman could be left off the opening day roster?

Apparently, yes, based on the way manager Dave Roberts has tip-toed around the question.

"Is he big league ready? I would say he is," Roberts said. "How we shake out, that's a different question. But yeah, he's doing everything he can do."

> 'Is he big league ready? I would say he is. How we shake out, that's a different question. But yeah, he's doing everything he can do.'
>
> Dave Roberts, Dodgers manager, on outfield prospect James Outman

As the clock ticks toward the end of camp, there are several factors at play.

Scouts have been split on how well Outman's game might translate to an extended big league stay.

Though he has the raw power and natural athleticism to be a potentially productive slugger, some evaluators have wondered if his swing still has a few too many moving pieces to hold up against higher-caliber pitchers capable of changing speeds and attacking various parts of the plate.

The Dodgers could consider going another direction with the roster spot that has been left open by Gavin Lux's season-ending injury. Other veteran options in the infield and outfield remain in contention, such as Steven Duggar, Yonny Hernández and Luke Williams.

At the crux of the decision, though, is what the Dodgers believe is best for Outman's future: guaranteed everyday at-bats in the minor leagues, at least for the opening leg of the season? Or more of a part-time role with the big league squad, which already has two left-handed-hitting outfielders penciled into its season-opening roster?

"High-class problems," Roberts said of the situation. "This is good, the competition. Guys are performing, guys are competing. And we have a lot of great options."

Outman declined to wade into the roster speculation Monday, saying he is "trying not to think about it" as spring training enters its final couple of weeks.

His recent focus has been on situational hitting and trying to refine his approach in high-leverage trips to the plate.

Sunday's game against the Cincinnati Reds provided the most recent test. In the third inning, Outman popped out with the bases loaded.

In his next at-bat, he bounced back with an RBI double.

"Training the *hitting* aspect, rather than just the swinging aspect, is a big thing," he said.

The immediate response caught Roberts' eye.

"James is unique," the manager said. "I put his mentality in the [Dodgers catcher] Will Smith bucket, as far as [being] unflappable."

Outman, meanwhile, is enjoying his breakout spring performance.

Among the many ways the rookie has ingratiated himself to his new teammates, the most visible might be the pet rock he keeps perched in his locker, a gray, fist-sized stone with a toothy smile markered on as a face.

Outman originally received it early in his triple-A stint last year, when Oklahoma City pitcher Marshall Kasowski passed it along as a good luck charm from the pitching staff.

"Hey, we used to have this for the pitchers," Kasowski told Outman. "But we started giving up too many hits."

Initially, the gift didn't work.

"I wasn't swinging it very well," he said.

Before long, though, Outman found a groove he has yet to lose.

So, the rock has stayed around as a minor superstition — going with him to spring training, road games and, maybe someday soon, a stall in the home clubhouse of Dodger Stadium.

Times staff writer Mike DiGiovanna contributed to this report.

STANDINGS

Standings have been arranged to reflect how the teams will be determined for the playoffs. Teams are ranked 1-15 by record. The top six teams in each conference qualify for the playoffs. Teams seven through 10 will participate in a play-in tournament with the top-seeded play-in team meeting the lowest qualifying play-in team. The next-lowest qualifying team would play the second, etc. Head-to-head competition is the first of several tiebreakers, followed by conference record. (Western Conference divisions:S-Southwest; P-Pacific; N-Northwest; Eastern Conference divisions: A-Atlantic; C-Central; S-Southeast).

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	PCT	GB	L10	Rk.
1. Denver	46	23	.667		5-5	N1
2. Memphis	41	26	.612	4	6-4	S1
3. Sacramento	40	27	.597	5	8-2	P1
4. Phoenix	37	32	.536	9	5-5	P2
5. CLIPPERS	36	33	.522	10	5-5	P4
5. Golden State	36	33	.522	10	7-3	P3
7. Minnesota	35	34	.507	11	5-5	N2
8. LAKERS	34	35	.493	12	7-3	P5
8. Dallas	34	35	.493	12	3-7	S2
8. Oklahoma City	34	35	.493	12	6-4	N3
11. New Orleans	33	36	.478	13	3-7	S3
11. Utah	33	36	.478	13	4-6	N4
13. Portland	31	38	.449	15	3-7	N5
14. San Antonio	18	50	.265	27½	4-6	S4
15. Houston	16	52	.235	29½	3-7	S5

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	PCT	GB	L10	Rk.
1. Milwaukee	50	19	.725		8-2	C1
2. Boston	47	22	.681	3	5-5	A1
3. Philadelphia	45	22	.672	4	7-3	A2
4. Cleveland	44	27	.620	7	6-4	C2
5. New York	41	30	.577	10	7-3	A3
6. Brooklyn	39	30	.565	11	5-5	A4
7. Miami	37	33	.529	13½	5-5	S1
8. Atlanta	34	35	.493	16	5-5	S2
9. Toronto	33	36	.478	17	5-5	A5
10. Washington	32	37	.464	18	4-6	S3
11. Chicago	31	36	.463	18	5-5	C3
12. Indiana	31	38	.449	19	6-4	C4
13. Orlando	28	41	.406	22	4-6	S4
14. Charlotte	22	49	.310	29	4-6	S5
15. Detroit	16	54	.229	34½	1-9	C5

TUESDAY'S RESULTS

LAKERS 123, New Orleans 108	Cleveland 120, Charlotte 104
Washington 117, Detroit 97	Toronto 125, Denver 110
Okla. City 121, Brooklyn 107	San Antonio 132, Orlando 114
Milwaukee 116, Phoenix 104	New York 123, Portland 107

TODAY'S GAMES

Favorite	Line	Underdog	Time
at Houston	OFF	LAKERS	5 p.m.
at CLIPPERS	2½	Golden State	7 p.m.
at Cleveland	OFF	Philadelphia	4:30 p.m.
at Miami	3½	Memphis	4:30 p.m.
Boston	4	at Minnesota	5 p.m.
Sacramento	1	at Chicago	5 p.m.
at San Antonio	OFF	Dallas	5:30 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

Through Monday's games

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Embiid, PHI	54	598	550	1804	33.4
Doncic, DAL	57	629	463	1879	33.0
Lillard, POR	54	521	467	1736	32.1
Antetokounmpo, MIL	53	593	437	1667	31.5
Gilgeous-Alexander, OKC	57	588	554	1780	31.2
Tatum, BOS	64	635	454	1937	30.3
Mitchell, CLE	59	574	267	1628	27.6
Morant, MEM	53	507	337	1436	27.1
Young, ATL	62	533	474	1677	27.0
Brown, BOS	57	569	240	1517	26.6
Fox, SAC	60	571	293	1531	25.5
Markkanen, UTA	62	533	320	1575	25.4
Randle, N.Y.	70	600	365	1768	25.3
DeRozan, CHI	61	552	387	1522	25.0
Edwards, MIN	69	623	287	1719	24.9
LaVine, CHI	63	547	300	1570	24.9
Jokic, DEN	60	563	300	1479	24.7
Siakam, TOR	58	512	311	1416	24.4
Brunson, N.Y.	62	525	304	1474	23.8
George, CLIPPERS	52	422	238	1231	23.7

MATTHEW HINTON Associated Press

LAKERS FORWARD LeBron James, who is sidelined by an injury, signals a three-point basket made by guard Malik Beasley in the first half. It was one of seven three-pointers by Beasley.

Davis, Beasley are clicking

[**Lakers,** from B10]

And he did, making five of his first six three-pointers. He made seven of 12 three-pointers overall, each three he took looking more and more pure.

"Yeah, I felt confident tonight," Beasley said. "I just told myself to keep doing what I'm doing, don't change anything up and don't worry about the pressure of making shots, just do it. I did that and I felt good to get back in rhythm, but especially to get the win."

This victory in which the Lakers built a 40-point lead in the third quarter and saw it dip to 13 in the fourth quarter before they righted themselves pulled them to within one game of .500.

The Lakers (34-35), tied with Dallas and Oklahoma City for the eighth-best record in the West, can get to .500 for the first time all season Wednesday at Houston.

But it won't be easy because Davis will not be playing.

Even though Davis is pain-free after recovering from a right foot stress injury, the Lakers organization has advised him and coach Darvin Ham that it's best to rest the center on the second of back-to-back games.

The Lakers have one more set of back-to-backs, at Utah on April 4 and at the Clippers on April 5.

"I mean, it's tough, especially because each game [is meaningful]," Davis said. "Obviously, you want to go out and play. But before I even came back, it's something the doctors and the organization discussed that they thought it would be best for me not to play back-to-backs because the foot, even though I'm not feeling pain and everything, it's still an active injury. It's still a stress reaction. And we're doing all the right things to make sure that I'm ready to go and I still need that day break. Obviously, it sucks."

The 15 three-pointers the Lakers drilled in the first 24 minutes were a franchise record for threes in a half. And Beasley had just about half, going seven for 10 from three-point range in the first half. They shot 46.2% from three-point range for the game.

The 36-point lead the Lakers built in the first half amounted to them scoring 75 points after the first two quarters, their highest scoring half this season. It was the Lakers' largest lead on the road since at least 1955. Their previous best lead at the half was 33 at Miami in 1989.

"At one point I was like, 'Damn, we hot,' especially after Rui [Hachimura] hit the second one," Beasley said. "So, that was huge for us just to see the ball go in."

For the first time since James suffered a right foot tendon injury against the Mavericks on Feb. 26, the Lakers' All-Star forward did some shooting during the team's shoot-around Tuesday and he did some weightlifting.

Ham said it was "definitely encouraging to see him out there."

LAKERS 123, PELICANS 108

LAKERS

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Brown Jr.	28	3-5	0-0	1-4	5	2	8
Vanderbilt	28	1-4	2-2	1-8	3	5	4
Davis	33	11-18	12-13	6-17	1	1	35
Beasley	31	8-16	1-1	1-2	3	0	24
Russell	32	5-15	4-4	0-5	3	1	17
Reaves	28	4-5	3-5	1-4	5	1	14
Hachimura	19	4-7	2-2	0-2	0	1	12
Schroder	18	1-5	1-1	0-2	3	1	3
Gabriel	14	3-6	0-0	5-8	1	3	6
Christie	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Reed	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Walker IV	1	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**40-82**	**25-28**	**15-52**	**24**	**16**	**123**

Shooting: Field goals, 48.8%; free throws, 89.3%

Three-point goals: 18-39 (Beasley 7-12, Reaves 3-4, Russell 3-9, Brown Jr. 2-3, Hachimura 2-3, Davis 1-2, Gabriel 0-1, Walker IV 0-1, Schroder 0-2, Vanderbilt 0-2). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 2 (Russell 2). Turnovers: 17 (Reaves 4, Davis 3, Russell 3, Gabriel 2, Beasley, Brown Jr., Hachimura, Schroder, Vanderbilt). Steals: 8 (Beasley 2, Brown Jr. 2, Russell 2, Reaves, Vanderbilt). Technical Fouls: Lakers, 5:32 third

NEW ORLEANS

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Ingram	37	9-17	3-4	1-6	6	4	22
Murphy III	37	7-14	2-3	1-3	1	1	20
Valanciunas	15	5-10	0-0	1-6	0	2	10
Jones	33	7-16	4-6	5-7	1	4	20
McCollum	36	5-17	2-4	1-3	9	5	13
Nance Jr.	22	3-5	0-0	3-5	2	2	7
Richardson	17	2-7	0-1	0-1	0	0	5
Marshall	16	2-8	2-2	0-4	2	3	7
Daniels	11	0-1	0-0	1-2	2	1	0
Hayes	9	2-3	0-0	2-3	0	2	4
Lewis Jr.	1	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0
Totals		**42-98**	**13-20**	**15-41**	**23**	**24**	**108**

Shooting: Field goals, 42.9%; free throws, 65.0%

Three-point goals: 11-43 (Murphy III 4-7, Jones 2-8, Nance Jr. 1-1, Richardson 1-4, Ingram 1-5, Marshall 1-6, McCollum 1-10, Valanciunas 0-2). Team Rebounds: 10. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 3 (Ingram, Murphy III, Valanciunas). Turnovers: 12 (Ingram 4, Jones 3, Murphy III 2, McCollum, Richardson, Valanciunas). Steals: 9 (Murphy III 3, Ingram 2, Jones 2, Nance Jr. 2). Technical Fouls: Jones, 00:38 third.

LAKERS	**39**	**36**	**23**	**25—123**
New Orleans	**24**	**16**	**35**	**33—108**

A—18,625. T—2:11.

Cavaliers 120, Hornets 104

CLEVELAND

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Okoro	35	1-3	0-0	2-3	1	5	3
Stevens	25	4-8	2-2	2-4	1	0	11
E.Mobley	30	10-16	6-6	1-6	2	2	26
Garland	27	7-15	3-5	0-3	7	1	19
LeVert	27	8-13	2-3	2-4	7	1	22
Osman	30	8-13	2-2	0-2	3	3	24
Rubio	20	5-11	1-1	0-5	4	3	11
Wade	19	0-4	0-0	0-0	0	2	0
Neto	5	0-0	0-0	0-0	3	0	0
Green	4	0-0	0-0	1-2	0	1	0
Merrill	4	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
I.Mobley	4	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	0	2
Windler	4	1-2	0-0	0-0	1	0	2
Totals		**45-88**	**16-19**	**8-30**	**29**	**19**	**120**

Shooting: Field goals, 51.1%; free throws, 84.2%

Three-point goals: 14-30 (Osman 6-10, LeVert 4-5, Garland 2-4, Okoro 1-1, Stevens 1-1, I.Mobley 0-1, Merrill 0-1, Windler 0-1, Rubio 0-2, Wade 0-4). Team Rebounds: 3. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 6 (E.Mobley, I.Mobley, LeVert, Okoro, Rubio, Wade). Turnovers: 8 (Rubio 3, Garland 2, Neto 2, Windler). Steals: 8 (LeVert 4, E.Mobley, Garland, Okoro, Windler). Technical Fouls: coach JB Bickerstaff, 10:52 second.

CHARLOTTE

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Hayward	29	4-8	1-2	0-3	6	0	10
Washington	35	4-7	1-2	0-5	2	2	9
Richards	22	3-3	1-2	2-8	1	3	7
Oubre Jr.	33	11-17	5-5	1-6	1	4	28
Rozier	35	10-20	0-0	0-3	9	0	22
Smith Jr.	31	3-6	0-0	1-4	8	2	6
Jones	15	2-3	0-0	1-5	0	3	4
Thor	15	4-7	2-2	1-6	1	2	11
McGowens	13	1-3	2-2	0-0	0	2	4
Mykhailiuk	7	1-2	0-0	0-0	0	0	3
Totals		**43-76**	**12-15**	**6-40**	**28**	**18**	**104**

Shooting: Field goals, 56.6%; free throws, 80.0%

Three-point goals: 6-23 (Rozier 2-7, Mykhailiuk 1-2, Thor 1-3, Hayward 1-4, Oubre Jr. 1-4, McGowens 0-1, Washington 0-2). Team Rebounds: 9. Team Turnovers: 3. Blocked Shots: 8 (Smith Jr. 2, Hayward, Jones, Mykhailiuk, Oubre Jr., Richards, Thor). Turnovers: 19 (Oubre Jr. 4, Richards 3, Hayward 2, Jones 2, McGowens 2, Rozier 2, Smith Jr. 2, Washington 2). Steals: 3 (Smith Jr. 2, Jones). Technical Fouls: None.

Cleveland	**30**	**33**	**35**	**22—120**
Charlotte	**27**	**21**	**28**	**28—104**

A—14,690. T—2:06.

DARREN ABATE Associated Press

EARLY RISER

Orlando's Wendell Carter Jr. goes to the basket against San Antonio's Zach Collins during the first half of the Spurs' 132-114 victory.

Bucks 116, Suns 104

MILWAUKEE

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
G.Anttknmpo	35	11-23	14-24	4-11	8	1	36
Connaughton	25	2-6	2-3	0-2	1	2	8
Lopez	34	10-14	0-1	2-10	1	2	21
Carter	23	3-6	0-0	1-3	1	3	9
Holiday	35	4-14	4-4	2-6	5	2	12
Ingles	27	2-7	0-0	2-3	7	4	6
Crowder	24	3-4	2-2	1-5	1	0	11
Portis	19	4-9	2-3	1-4	0	0	11
Matthews	9	1-2	0-0	0-1	0	1	2
Green	5	0-0	0-0	0-1	0	0	0
Totals		**40-85**	**24-37**	**13-46**	**24**	**15**	**116**

Shooting: Field goals, 47.1%; free throws, 64.9%

Three-point goals: 12-39 (Crowder 3-4, Carter 3-5, Connaughton 2-6, Ingles 2-7, Portis 1-3, Lopez 1-5, Matthews 0-1, G.Antetokounmpo 0-3, Holiday 0-5). Team Rebounds: 17. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 6 (Connaughton 3, G.Antetokounmpo, Holiday, Lopez). Turnovers: 12 (Holiday 6, G.Antetokounmpo 3, Ingles 2, Carter). Steals: 8 (Lopez 2, Carter, Connaughton, G.Antetokounmpo, Holiday, Ingles, Portis). Technical Fouls: None.

PHOENIX

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Craig	21	2-5	0-0	0-3	2	2	6
Okogie	35	1-5	6-8	2-7	4	3	8
Ayton	25	8-19	0-0	2-8	0	5	16
Booker	43	13-27	3-3	1-4	3	4	30
Paul	33	5-11	1-1	0-4	8	4	11
Wainright	24	3-6	0-0	0-3	0	3	8
Payne	17	4-9	2-2	0-2	2	0	13
Landale	14	5-6	2-2	1-3	2	1	12
Ross	11	0-3	0-0	0-2	2	2	0
Biyombo	8	0-1	0-0	2-3	0	2	0
Warren	5	0-3	0-0	0-2	0	0	0
Totals		**41-95**	**14-16**	**8-41**	**23**	**26**	**104**

Shooting: Field goals, 43.2%; free throws, 87.5%

Three-point goals: 8-23 (Payne 3-5, Craig 2-4, Wainright 2-5, Booker 1-3, Ayton 0-1, Landale 0-1, Okogie 0-1, Ross 0-1, Paul 0-2). Team Rebounds: 10. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 3 (Wainright 2, Craig). Turnovers: 11 (Booker 5, Ayton 2, Craig, Landale, Okogie, Paul). Steals: 7 (Booker 2, Okogie 2, Paul 2, Ross). Technical Fouls: Booker, 6:21 third

Milwaukee	**29**	**28**	**28**	**31—116**
Phoenix	**24**	**24**	**36**	**20—104**

A—17,071. T—2:15.

Thunder 121, Nets 107

BROOKLYN

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Finney-Smith	34	2-8	0-0	5-7	2	3	5
Johnson	39	7-13	6-8	0-9	3	3	23
Claxton	38	4-7	4-9	4-12	2	1	12
Bridges	37	11-23	9-11	0-4	2	3	34
Dinwiddie	39	5-16	6-6	1-6	11	5	16
Curry	18	3-6	0-0	0-2	1	1	8
O'Neale	17	2-4	0-0	1-5	2	2	6
Harris	11	1-4	0-0	0-1	2	2	3
Thomas	3	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**35-82**	**25-34**	**11-46**	**25**	**20**	**107**

Shooting: Field goals, 42.7%; free throws, 73.5%

Three-point goals: 12-41 (Johnson 3-7, Bridges 3-10, O'Neale 2-4, Curry 2-5, Harris 1-4, Finney-Smith 1-6, Thomas 0-1, Dinwiddie 0-4). Team Rebounds: 11. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 5 (Bridges 4, Claxton). Turnovers: 17 (Dinwiddie 6, Bridges 3, Claxton 2, Johnson 2, Finney-Smith, Harris, O'Neale, Thomas). Steals: 3 (Dinwiddie 2, Johnson). Technical Fouls: None.

OKLAHOMA CITY

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Dort	34	9-16	0-0	3-9	1	1	24
Jal.Williams	36	8-10	6-6	2-10	3	3	23
Jay.Williams	18	2-5	2-2	2-7	2	5	7
Giddey	36	7-19	0-1	4-13	10	3	15
Gilgus-Alxndr	36	12-24	10-12	1-7	4	4	35
Joe	24	2-8	0-0	1-3	2	2	5
Waters III	19	0-3	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Dieng	12	2-8	0-0	1-2	0	1	4
Wiggins	10	1-2	2-2	0-0	0	1	4
Saric	10	2-4	0-0	0-0	0	4	4
Totals		**45-99**	**20-23**	**14-51**	**22**	**25**	**121**

Shooting: Field goals, 45.5%; free throws, 87.0%

Three-point goals: 11-33 (Dort 6-11, Gilgeous-Alexander 1-1, Jal.Williams 1-2, Jay.Williams 1-2, Giddey 1-3, Joe 1-5, Saric 0-1, Wiggins 0-1, Waters III 0-3, Dieng 0-4). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: 2. Blocked Shots: 0 Turnovers: 9 (Gilgeous-Alexander 3, Saric 2, Dieng, Giddey, Jay.Williams, Waters III). Steals: 9 (Giddey 2, Jal.Williams 2, Jay.Williams 2, Dort, Gilgeous-Alexander, Joe). Technical Fouls: None.

Brooklyn	**33**	**29**	**20**	**25—107**
Oklahoma City	**24**	**28**	**38**	**31—121**

A—16,976. T—2:17.

Wizards 117, Pistons 97

DETROIT

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
McGruder	38	6-15	0-0	2-6	0	3	16
Omoruyi	20	4-12	0-1	2-4	2	4	8
Wiseman	30	4-15	4-4	5-10	1	1	12
Hampton	27	2-7	0-0	1-3	1	2	5
Hayes	35	10-21	0-0	0-3	7	2	20
Joseph	30	4-9	2-2	1-4	5	0	12
Boeheim	22	2-7	2-2	2-2	2	2	8
Duren	17	4-8	1-1	5-8	0	4	9
Rhoden	17	2-5	2-2	1-4	0	1	7
Totals		**38-99**	**11-12**	**19-44**	**18**	**19**	**97**

Shooting: Field goals, 38.4%; free throws, 91.7%

Three-point goals: 10-34 (McGruder 4-9, Joseph 2-5, Boeheim 2-6, Hampton 1-3, Rhoden 1-3, Wiseman 0-1, Hayes 0-2, Omoruyi 0-5). Team Rebounds: 4. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 3 (Duren, Joseph, Wiseman). Turnovers: 11 (Hayes 5, Joseph 4, Duren, Hampton). Steals: 8 (Hayes 3, Joseph 2, Omoruyi, Rhoden, Wiseman). Technical Fouls: Hayes, 00:57 fourth.

WASHINGTON

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Kispert	33	6-14	2-2	1-2	0	1	16
Porzingis	30	5-15	8-8	1-7	4	2	18
Gafford	22	2-4	0-0	2-6	4	0	4
Beal	32	13-15	6-6	0-6	7	3	36
Morris	27	6-10	1-1	1-8	4	0	13
Avdija	28	6-8	0-0	0-6	2	1	13
Wright	21	0-5	0-0	3-3	3	1	0
Davis	18	5-11	1-1	1-5	0	1	11
Goodwin	12	1-3	0-0	0-2	0	2	2
Gibson	4	0-0	2-2	0-2	0	0	2
Gill	3	0-0	2-2	1-1	0	0	2
Huff	3	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Totals		**44-85**	**22-22**	**10-48**	**24**	**12**	**117**

Shooting: Field goals, 51.8%; free throws, 0.0%

Three-point goals: 7-32 (Beal 4-6, Kispert 2-8, Avdija 1-3, Goodwin 0-1, Davis 0-2, Morris 0-3, Wright 0-3, Porzingis 0-6). Team Rebounds: 7. Team Turnovers: 2. Blocked Shots: 9 (Porzingis 4, Gafford 3, Beal, Gibson). Turnovers: 13 (Beal 3, Huff 2, Morris 2, Avdija, Davis, Gill, Goodwin, Kispert, Porzingis). Steals: 9 (Porzingis 3, Beal 2, Gafford 2, Gibson, Kispert). Technical Fouls: None.

Detroit	**20**	**25**	**27**	**25— 97**
Washington	**38**	**23**	**33**	**23—117**

A—15,279. T—2:01.

Raptors 125, Nuggets 110

DENVER

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Gordon	34	8-13	2-6	0-1	3	2	18
M.Porter Jr.	32	8-13	2-2	0-6	2	2	23
Jokic	34	10-13	8-8	2-8	7	3	28
Caldwell-Pope	29	1-2	1-1	0-2	4	1	3
Murray	40	5-18	3-4	0-2	9	3	14
Brown	22	5-7	2-2	0-4	1	2	12
Green	19	3-5	2-2	2-5	3	1	8
Braun	16	2-2	0-0	0-3	0	1	4
Bryant	8	0-3	0-0	0-1	0	2	0
Cancar	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Smith	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**42-76**	**20-25**	**4-32**	**29**	**17**	**110**

Shooting: Field goals, 55.3%; free throws, 80.0%

Three-point goals: 6-25 (M.Porter Jr. 5-9, Murray 1-8, Brown 0-1, Caldwell-Pope 0-1, Gordon 0-1, Jokic 0-1, Bryant 0-2, Green 0-2). Team Rebounds: 6. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 4 (Braun, Caldwell-Pope, Gordon, Murray). Turnovers: 14 (Murray 5, Jokic 4, M.Porter Jr. 2, Brown, Bryant, Green). Steals: 9 (Caldwell-Pope 2, Gordon 2, M.Porter Jr. 2, Murray 2, Jokic). Technical Fouls: Gordon, 00:06 second.

TORONTO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Anunoby	34	10-14	0-0	1-3	3	4	24
Siakam	39	6-16	0-1	1-8	4	4	12
Poeltl	27	5-6	2-2	3-11	5	4	12
Barnes	37	8-16	2-2	4-7	5	2	18
VanVleet	37	13-22	2-3	0-3	7	2	36
Trent Jr.	25	3-9	5-5	1-3	0	0	11
Achiuwa	13	0-3	4-4	3-4	1	0	4
Boucher	11	3-4	0-0	1-4	0	1	6
Barton	10	1-3	0-0	0-1	0	1	2
Flynn	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Koloko	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**49-93**	**15-17**	**14-44**	**25**	**18**	**125**

Shooting: Field goals, 52.7%; free throws, 88.2%

Three-point goals: 12-30 (VanVleet 8-12, Anunoby 4-8, Achiuwa 0-1, Barnes 0-1, Barton 0-1, Boucher 0-1, Siakam 0-3, Trent Jr. 0-3). Team Rebounds: 3. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 2 (Poeltl 2). Turnovers: 11 (Barnes 4, Siakam 3, VanVleet 2, Anunoby, Poeltl). Steals: 10 (VanVleet 3, Trent Jr. 2, Anunoby, Barnes, Barton, Poeltl, Siakam). Technical Fouls: Raptors, 3:58 first

Denver	**30**	**26**	**36**	**18—110**
Toronto	**49**	**23**	**26**	**27—125**

A—19,800. T—2:10.

Spurs 132, Magic 114

ORLANDO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Banchero	31	11-21	3-5	0-6	0	1	27
F.Wagner	28	5-12	0-0	0-2	4	1	11
Carter Jr.	28	7-15	1-2	4-10	3	3	16
Fultz	30	5-13	3-3	2-4	6	2	13
G.Harris	24	1-3	0-0	1-1	2	2	3
Anthony	29	5-13	2-2	2-5	4	4	14
Suggs	22	5-13	0-0	1-1	1	1	12
M.Wagner	19	3-4	5-7	3-7	1	0	12
Bol	16	2-3	2-2	0-6	2	1	6
K.Harris	6	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	1	0
Houstan	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Totals		**44-97**	**16-21**	**13-42**	**24**	**16**	**114**

Shooting: Field goals, 45.4%; free throws, 76.2%

Three-point goals: 10-29 (Banchero 2-4, Anthony 2-5, Suggs 2-7, M.Wagner 1-1, G.Harris 1-2, F.Wagner 1-3, Carter Jr. 1-6, Bol 0-1). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: None. Blocked Shots: 2 (Banchero, Fultz). Turnovers: 9 (Banchero 3, F.Wagner 2, Fultz 2, Bol, Suggs). Steals: 7 (Suggs 2, Bol, F.Wagner, Fultz, G.Harris, M.Wagner). Technical Fouls: None.

SAN ANTONIO

	Min	FG-A	FT-A	OR-T	A	P	T
Bates-Diop	26	5-7	0-0	1-5	4	0	14
Sochan	31	11-19	4-6	1-11	2	4	29
Collins	28	10-14	2-2	2-6	5	0	25
Graham	24	4-7	6-7	0-4	9	1	15
Vassell	32	4-11	1-1	0-6	4	2	10
McDermott	24	5-8	0-0	0-2	2	2	15
Wesley	23	3-8	0-0	0-2	7	2	8
Mamukelashvili	21	2-5	1-2	2-7	3	3	7
Barlow	11	2-2	0-0	1-2	0	2	4
Bassey	8	1-2	0-0	0-0	2	1	2
Champagnie	7	1-2	0-0	0-2	1	0	3
Totals		**48-85**	**14-18**	**7-47**	**39**	**17**	**132**

Shooting: Field goals, 56.5%; free throws, 77.8%

Three-point goals: 22-41 (McDermott 5-8, Bates-Diop 4-6, Collins 3-3, Sochan 3-6, Mamukelashvili 2-4, Wesley 2-5, Champagnie 1-2, Graham 1-3, Vassell 1-4). Team Rebounds: 5. Team Turnovers: 1. Blocked Shots: 7 (Collins 3, Vassell 2, Barlow, Bassey). Turnovers: 14 (Sochan 3, Graham 2, Mamukelashvili 2, McDermott 2, Vassell 2, Wesley 2, Champagnie). Steals: 6 (Bassey, Bates-Diop, Collins, Graham, McDermott, Sochan). Technical Fouls: None.

Orlando	**29**	**32**	**28**	**25—114**
San Antonio	**38**	**29**	**31**	**34—132**

A—13

COLLEGE BASKETBALL ROUNDUP

First Four games tip off with two thrillers

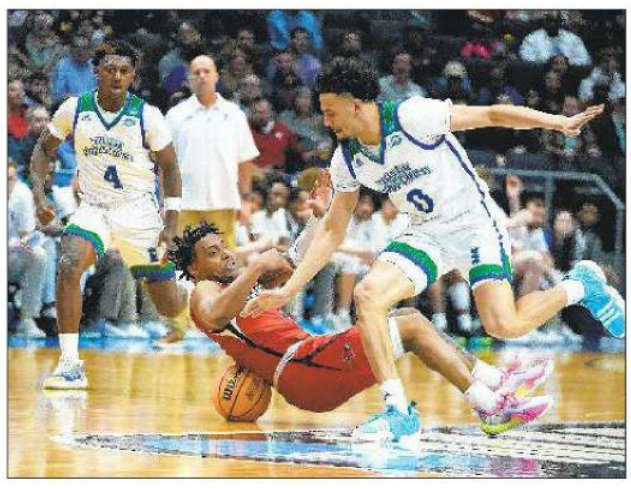
STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Jamarius Burton made a go-ahead jumper with 10 seconds left, and Pittsburgh edged Mississippi State 60-59 in a back-and-forth First Four game Tuesday night in Dayton, Ohio, that featured 21 lead changes — the most in the NCAA tournament in five years.

Mississippi State had a great chance to win at the end, but Shakeel Moore missed a wide-open three-point try from the corner with two seconds remaining, and D.J. Jeffries' tip-in attempt was off target just before the buzzer.

Nelly Cummings led Pittsburgh with 15 points. Greg Elliott scored 13 and Blake Hinson added 12 as the Panthers (23-11) won an NCAA tournament game for the first time since 2014.

Pittsburgh slotted into the Midwest Region as the 11th seed and advanced to face No. 6 Iowa State on Friday in Greensboro, N.C.



DARRON CUMMINGS Associated Press

PHILLIP RUSSELL, left, and Trevian Tennyson go for the ball during Texas A&M Corpus Christi's win.

A layup by Tolu Smith gave Mississippi State (21-13) a 59-58 advantage with 32 seconds left, but Pittsburgh — after a three-minute scoring drought — grabbed the lead back on Burton's short jumper.

Texas A&M Corpus Christi 75, Southeast Missouri State 71: Isaac Mushila had 15 points and 12 rebounds, and the Islanders (24-10) held off the Redhawks (19-17) to earn the first NCAA tournament win in program history.

Texas A&M Corpus Christi went four for four at the free-throw line in the final 15 seconds to ice the game and advance to play top-seeded Alabama in the South Region.

Southeast Missouri State (19-17) erased a 10-point deficit and tied it at 64 when Chris Harris made two free throws with 3:07 left.

UCLA's Clark up for defensive award

UCLA guard Jaylen Clark is one of four finalists for the Naismith defensive player of the year.

Clark led the Pac-12 in steals per game (2.6) for the Bruins, who have the conference's No. 1-ranked scoring defense, giving up 60.3 points per game.

His single-season total in steals (78) is tied for third with former Bruins guard Darren Collison from the 2006-07 season. Clark, who is out for the season with a lower-leg injury, finished 17 steals shy of tying the Bruins' single-season mark (95) held by guard Jordan Adams (2013-14).

Northwestern's Chase Audige, Rutgers' Caleb McConnell and Creighton's Ryan Kalkbrenner are the other finalists.

NIT

at Michigan 90, Toledo 80: Kobe Bufkin scored 23 points, and the Wolverines (18-15) beat the Rockets (27-8) in the first round.

at Alabama Birmingham 88, Southern Mississippi 60: KJ Buffen scored a career-high 26 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to help the Blazers (26-9) beat the Golden Eagles (25-8).

Hofstra 88, at Rutgers 86 (OT): Tyler Thomas scored 25 points, including a go-ahead jumper with 9.3 seconds left in overtime, and Hofstra (25-9) defeated top-seeded Rutgers (19-15).

at Liberty 62, Villanova 57: Darius McGhee sank five threes and scored 26 points to lead the Flames (27-8) past the Wildcats (17-17).

at Colorado 65, Seton Hall 64: Ethan Wright scored a season-high 18 points, and the Buffaloes survived a last-second shot.

More awards

Purdue center Zach Edey, Indiana forward Trayce Jackson-Davis, Kansas forward Jalen Wilson, Houston guard Marcus Sasser and Alabama forward Brandon Miller were selected first-team Associated Press All-Americans.

The 7-foot-4, 305-pound Edey appeared on all 58 ballots as a first-team selection from AP top 25 poll voters as the only unanimous pick.

The selections of Edey and Jackson-Davis came a year after the Big Ten had three first-team picks. And it gave the league seven through the last three seasons.

Twelve key factors for 12th title

[**UCLA,** from B10]
and the Bruins rarely commit bad turnovers in the final minutes.

Jaquez and Campbell also have made many clutch shots to help the Bruins persevere in tough situations.

3. Bailey sustains his scoring surge

Amari Bailey, UCLA's top freshman guard, has averaged 18 points in the three games since Jaylen Clark was lost to a season-ending leg injury.

Bailey's career-high 26 points carried the Bruins to a victory over Colorado in the Pac-12 tournament. He scored 19 points two days later against Arizona, not counting the vicious, one-handed dunk that was taken off the board when he was called for an offensive foul.

If Bailey can continue to be a reliable third scoring option, it will make UCLA incredibly hard to beat.

4. Bona avoids foul trouble

Once buoyant Bruins big man Adem Bona returns from the shoulder injury he sustained against Oregon last weekend, he must stay on the court as long as possible given the considerable drop-off among the players behind him in the rotation.

Bona hasn't fouled out since Feb. 16, largely avoiding the ticky-tack fouls that led to lengthy stretches on the bench earlier in the season.

Cronin said Bona's soreness had subsided considerably in recent days, but it's unknown whether he will be able to play in the tournament opener.

5. Singleton makes a couple of threes

The Bruins must free senior sharpshooter David Singleton for more three-pointers given the need to replace Clark's offensive production.

Singleton has made a team-leading 43.2% of his shots from long range, but he took only one three-pointer and went scoreless in the recent loss to Arizona. He's going to need to be a larger factor for the Bruins to advance past the first couple of rounds.

6. Give the press a chance

Clark's absence makes UCLA's full-court press considerably less fearsome, but the Bruins essentially abandoned it in their final two Pac-12 tournament games after breaking it out briefly against Colorado.

Although it makes some sense to focus on half-court defense with Clark out, this team has enough long, athletic defenders to create havoc with its press, especially when Dylan Andrews and Will McClendon are on the court.

Cronin should use this weapon at least occasionally to see whether it can force turnovers that lead to easy baskets.

7. McClendon helps on offense

The freshman hailed as a 3-and-D dynamo has lived up to half his billing.

McClendon's defense has been plenty disruptive, but he has struggled mightily with his shooting, making two of 26 three-pointers (.077%).

Teams have started leaving him open and daring him to shoot.

He's going to need to make a few baskets for the Bruins to prevail in tight games.

RINGO H.W. CHIU Associated Press

UCLA NEEDS sharpshooter David Singleton (34) to make a deep impression in the NCAA tournament.

8. Get more from the backup big men

Bona's uncertain status means that Kenneth Nwuba and Mac Etienne might continue to enjoy more prominent roles.

Nwuba started against Arizona last weekend and played some admirable defense before fouling out. Etienne grabbed seven rebounds before fouling out.

They combined for three points in 34 minutes.

That's not a winning formula because it forces the Bruins to play four-on-five on offense.

9. Receive better fan support

UCLA should have a decided home-court advantage in the first two rounds in Sacramento, but Bruins fans have been noticeably outnumbered during recent games in Las Vegas.

T-Mobile Arena was swathed in orange during a loss to Illinois in November. A similar scene unfolded last weekend when Arizona fans overtook the place.

UCLA will need considerable fan reinforcements to swing the decibel level in its favor, especially if it faces Gonzaga in the Sweet 16.

10. Avoid slow starts

In each of their final three regular-season games, the Bruins fell behind by double digits in the first half.

They came back to win each time, but that sort of thing is living dangerously. Big early deficits against better opponents could spell doom in the NCAA tournament.

11. Maximize available talent

Cronin might have contributed to his team's Sweet 16 exit last season when he didn't use his best defensive lineup against North Carolina.

The coach started Cody Riley instead of Myles Johnson against Tar Heels big man Armando Bacot, who finished with 14 points and 15 rebounds, and gave Clark only five minutes off the bench when he could have been used far more extensively to pester Caleb Love, who poured in 30 points.

This year, Cronin's biggest lineup challenges could be finding the right number of minutes for Andrews and McClendon to sustain defensive intensity and keep Jaquez and Campbell fresh late in games.

12. Get a little lucky in Las Vegas

The Bruins keep crapping out on the Strip.

Recent memories include a pair of Pac-12 tournament championship game losses to Arizona, not to mention back-to-back defeats against Illinois and Baylor.

There also was an embarrassing blowout against Gonzaga a little more than a year ago.

If all goes well, UCLA expunges those sins against the Bulldogs next week.

NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT SCHEDULES

All times Pacific

MEN

TUESDAY'S FIRST FOUR RESULTS
16 Texas A&M Corpus Christi 75, 16 Southeast Missouri State 71
11 Pittsburgh 60, 11 Mississippi State 59

TODAY'S FIRST FOUR GAMES
16 Texas South. (14-20) vs. 16 Fairleigh Dickinson (19-15) .... 3:40 p.m.
11 Arizona State (22-12) vs. 11 Nevada (22-10) ..... 6:10 p.m.

THURSDAY'S FIRST ROUND
EAST REGIONAL
5 Duke (26-8) vs. 12 Oral Roberts (30-4) ..... 4:10 p.m.
4 Tennessee (23-10) vs. 13 Louisiana Lafayette (26-7) ..... 6:40 p.m.

SOUTH REGIONAL
8 Maryland (21-12) vs. 9 West Virginia (19-14) ..... 9:15 a.m.
4 Virginia (25-7) vs. 13 Furman (27-7) ..... 9:40 a.m.
7 Missouri (24-9) vs. 10 Utah State (26-8) ..... 10:40 a.m.
1 Alabama (29-5) vs. 16 Texas A&M Corpus Christi (24-10) .. 11:45 a.m.
5 San Diego St. (27-6) vs. 12 College of Charleston (31-3) ... 12:10 p.m.
2 Arizona (28-6) vs. 15 Princeton (21-8) ..... 1:10 p.m.

MIDWEST REGIONAL
8 Iowa (19-13) vs. 9 Auburn (20-12) ..... 3:50 p.m.
2 Texas (26-8) vs. 15 Colgate (26-8) ..... 4:25 p.m.
1 Houston (31-3) vs. 16 Northern Kentucky (22-12) ..... 6:20 p.m.
7 Texas A&M (25-9) vs. 10 Penn State (22-13) ..... 6:55 p.m.

WEST REGIONAL
1 Kansas (27-7) vs. 16 Howard (22-12) ..... 11 a.m.
8 Arkansas (20-13) vs. 9 Illinois (20-12) ..... 1:30 p.m.
7 Northwestern (21-11) vs. 10 Boise State (24-9) ..... 4:35 p.m.
2 UCLA (29-5) vs. 15 UNC Asheville (27-7) ..... 7:05 p.m.

FRIDAY'S FIRST-ROUND GAMES
EAST REGIONAL
7 Michigan State (19-12) vs. 10 USC (22-10) ..... 9:15 a.m.
2 Marquette (28-6) vs. 15 Vermont (23-10) ..... 11:45 a.m.
1 Purdue (29-5) vs. 16 Texas South.-Fairleigh Dick. winner ... 3:50 p.m.
6 Kentucky (21-11) vs. 11 Providence (21-11) ..... 4:10 p.m.
8 Memphis (26-8) vs. 9 Florida Atlantic (31-3) ..... 6:20 p.m.
3 Kansas State (23-9) vs. 14 Montana State (25-9) ..... 6:40 p.m.

SOUTH REGIONAL
3 Baylor (22-10) vs. 14 UC Santa Barbara (27-7) ..... 10:30 a.m.
6 Creighton (21-12) vs. 11 North Carolina State (23-10) ..... 1 p.m.

MIDWEST REGIONAL
3 Xavier (25-9) vs. 14 Kennesaw State (26-8) ..... 9:40 a.m.
6 Iowa State (19-13) vs. 11 Pittsburgh (23-11) ..... 12:10 p.m.
5 Miami (25-7) vs. 12 Drake (27-7) ..... 4:25 p.m.
4 Indiana (22-11) vs. 13 Kent State (28-6) ..... 6:55 p.m.

WEST REGIONAL
5 Saint Mary's (26-7) vs. 12 Virginia Commonwealth (27-7) ..... 11 a.m.
4 Connecticut (25-8) vs. 13 Iona (27-7) ..... 1:30 p.m.
3 Gonzaga (28-5) vs. 14 Grand Canyon (24-11) ..... 4:35 p.m.
6 Texas Christian (21-12) vs. 11 Arizona St.-Nevada winner .... 7:05 p.m.

WOMEN

TODAY'S FIRST FOUR GAMES
11 Illinois (22-9) vs. 11 Mississippi State (20-10) ..... 4 p.m.
16 Sacred Heart (18-13) vs. 16 Southern (18-14) ..... 6 p.m.

THURSDAY'S FIRST FOUR GAMES
11 Purdue (19-10) vs. 11 St. John's (22-8) ..... 1 p.m.
16 Monmouth (18-15) vs. 16 Tennessee Tech (22-9) ..... 6 p.m.

PRO CALENDAR

	WED 15	THU 16	FRI 17	SAT 18	SUN 19
LAKERS	at Houston 5 SpecSN		DALLAS 7:30 SpecSN		ORLANDO 6:30 SpecSN
CLIPPERS	GOLDEN STATE 7 BSSC, ESPN			ORLANDO Noon Ch. 5	at Portland 6 BSSC
KINGS		COLUMBUS 7:30 BSW		VANCOUVER 7 BSW	
DUCKS	N.Y. ISLANDERS 7 BSW		COLUMBUS 7 BSSC		VANCOUVER 5 BSW
GALAXY				VANCOUVER 7:30 Apple TV	
LAFC	ALAJUELENSE ** 7:30 FS2, TUDN			at Seattle 1 Ch. 11, Apple TV	

DODGERS: Today vs. Colorado (Glendale), 6 p.m., SNLA*

Shade denotes home game. *Spring training in Arizona **CONCACAF Champions League

TODAY ON THE AIR

TIME	EVENT	ON THE AIR
BASEBALL		
9 a.m.	WBC, Venezuela vs. Israel	**TV:** FS2, FOXD
10 a.m.	Philadelphia vs. New York Yankees at Tampa, Fla.	**TV:** MLB
Noon	WBC, Mexico vs. Canada	**TV:** FS2, FOXD
4 p.m.	WBC, Puerto Rico vs. Dominican Republic	**TV:** FS1, FOXD
6 p.m.	Colorado vs. Dodgers at Glendale, Ariz.	**TV:** SNLA
7 p.m.	WBC, United States vs. Colombia	**TV:** FS1, FOXD
BASKETBALL		
4:30 p.m.	Philadelphia at Cleveland	**TV:** ESPN, ESPND
5 p.m.	Lakers at Houston	**TV:** SpecSN **R:** 710, 1330
7 p.m.	Golden State at Clippers	**TV:** BSSC, ESPN, ESPND **R:** 570 1220
COLLEGE BASKETBALL: TOURNAMENTS		
3:30 p.m.	NCAA First Four: Fairleigh Dickinson vs. Texas Southern	**TV:** TruTV
4 p.m.	NIT, Central Florida at Florida	**TV:** ESPN2
4 p.m.	NCAA Women First Four: Mississippi State vs. Illinois	**TV:** ESPNU
6 p.m.	NIT, Virginia Tech at Cincinnati	**TV:** ESPN2
6 p.m.	NCAA Women First Four: Sacred Heart vs. Southern	**TV:** ESPNU
6 p.m.	NCAA First Four: Nevada vs. Arizona State	**TV:** TruTV
8 p.m.	NIT, UC Irvine at Oregon	**TV:** ESPN2
COLLEGE SOFTBALL		
4 p.m.	Charlotte at Clemson	**TV:** ACC
HOCKEY		
4 p.m.	Colorado at Toronto	**TV:** TNT
6:30 p.m.	Minnesota at St. Louis	**TV:** TNT
7 p.m.	New York Islanders at Ducks	**TV:** BSW **R:** Ducks Stream
SOCCER		
12:30 p.m.	England, Brentford at Southampton	**TV:** USA
1 p.m.	UEFA Champions League, Liverpool at Real Madrid	**TV:** KMEX, TUDN, Univision **R:** 1330
3 p.m.	CONCACAF Champions League, Vancouver (MLS) at Real España	**TV:** FS2, TUDN
5 p.m.	CONCACAF Champions League, UANL at Orlando (MLS)	**TV:** FS2, TUDN
5:30 p.m.	Copa Libertadores, Millonarios at Mineiro	**TV:** beIN1
5:30 p.m.	Copa Libertadores, Magallanes at Medellín	**TV:** beINes
7:30 p.m.	CONCACAF Champions League, Alajuelense at LAFC (MLS)	**TV:** FS2, TUDN
TENNIS		
11 a.m.	BNP Paribas Open, quarterfinals	**TV:** Tennis
7 p.m.	BNP Paribas Open, quarterfinals	**TV:** Tennis

SPORTS

Twelve key steps as UCLA pursues 12th title

Bruins must be in sync on a variety of moves to dance their way to NCAA crown again.

By Ben Bolch

Winning in the Big Dance requires being able to move to every song that's playing.

That's a March mantra UCLA coach Mick Cronin likes to repeat. It originated with his 81-year-old father, Hep, a former high school basketball coach now known for his fist pumps during Bruins victories.

"It ain't the tango every night," Mick Cronin said. "You got to be able to win in different ways against different styles."

The Bruins' relentless defense and ability to protect the ball like a newborn make them capable of beating any team this time of year. But there are more than a few missteps they must avoid to keep dancing through "One Shining Moment," the season's final song.

As No. 2 seed UCLA (29-5) prepares to open the NCAA tournament Thursday night at Golden 1 Center in Sacramento against No. 15 seed North Carolina Asheville (27-7), it hopes that this is just the start of a Big Dance marathon leading to the school's first national championship since 1995.

Here are 12 things that must go right for the Bruins to raise banner No. 12:

1. Stars can't disappear at the same time

There's been one common theme in UCLA's losses — Jaime Jaquez Jr. and Tyger Campbell both have shot poorly.

It happened again last weekend in the Pac-12 tournament championship game, the Bruins' top two players combining to make just 10 of 32 shots (31.3%). The duo shot 37.8% against Illinois, 38.5% against Baylor, 45% in the loss to USC and 28.6% in the first loss to Arizona.

For UCLA to make a deep run, Jaquez and Campbell can't both go cold at the same time. Cronin can help by giving them an extra minute or two of rest in the first half, avoiding tired legs that lead to missed shots in the final minutes.

2. Closeout specials continue

The last few minutes of almost every game have been winning time for the Bruins.

That's largely a function of their veteran savvy and fearlessness first unveiled on the way to the 2021 Final Four. UCLA's defense tends to get better late in games,

[See **UCLA,** B9]

Photographs by Matthew Hinton Associated Press

LAKERS FORWARD Anthony Davis, who had 35 points and 17 rebounds, shoots against the double team of New Orleans Pelicans forward Larry Nance Jr. (22) and guard Trey Murphy III. The Lakers had a season-high 75 points and led by 35 at halftime.

Given shot, they don't miss

Davis' big game and Beasley's seven threes help Lakers bounce back

LAKERS 123
NEW ORLEANS 108

By Broderick Turner

NEW ORLEANS — They both were looking for some redemption for their poor play and both Anthony Davis and Malik Beasley delivered on their promise to be better for the Lakers the next time out.

Throughout his 33 minutes and 19 seconds Tuesday night at New Orleans, Davis played with force and a determination in collecting 35 points and 17 rebounds.

Throughout his 16 minutes in the first half when Beasley did most of his damage, the shooting guard was stroking his three-ball with ease in scoring 21 of his 24 in the first 24 minutes.

Davis and Beasley were the constants for the Lakers, who had five players score in double figures as they shot lights out from three-point range during a 123-108 win over the Pelicans at Smoothie King Center.

This marked the ninth game in which Davis has produced at least 30 points and 15 rebounds, the most in the NBA this season.

He was 11 for 19 from the field and missed just one of his 13 free throws in helping the Lakers bounce back from Sunday's loss to New York.

"I took a lot of ownership for that game against New York, the way I played," Davis said. "I just wanted to come out ultra aggressive tonight, knowing how important this game was. Everybody did. We were playing the right way, playing great defensively and sharing the ball offensively, playing together and we were clicking on all cylinders."

The joke LeBron James made to Beasley still had the Lakers guard laughing when he told it to the media at the shoot-around earlier Tuesday, and it apparently put him at ease and in the right frame of mind to forget about his shooting woes.

"Bron said I can't miss three in a row no more," Beasley said, smiling. "So, now I gotta make sure I don't miss three in a row and just make the right shots."

[See **Lakers,** B8]

LAKERS FORWARD Wenyen Gabriel goes to basket against the defense of the Pelicans' Murphy in the first half.

Patrick Semansky Associated Press

BATTING PRACTICE pitcher Ali Modami, then with Washington, carries Brian Dozier in 2019. Modami now is with the Angels — and Team USA.

Fun ride for BP pitcher

Angels' Modami lands dream role in WBC

By Jorge Castillo

PHOENIX — Ali Modami was in a batting cage last week, as he is almost every day eight months out of the year, when he was approached with a question he gets often from someone he never imagined would ask.

"Hey, do you want to throw?" Ken Griffey Jr. asked.

Of course, Modami said. He tried hard to hide his excitement as he played catch with Griffey, Team USA's hitting coach and a Hall of Famer whom Modami, along with millions of other kids, idolized in the 1990s.

"My 12-year-old self would've s— myself," Modami said jokingly. "And then him and Mike were in there talking. I would've paid millions of dollars to hear that conversation. Two of the greatest players to ever play. I'm just blessed to be here."

Mike, of course, is Mike Trout. The

[See **Modami,** B7]

Right off the bat, Outman has been a hit for Dodgers

Outfield prospect has impressed this spring, but will he get spot on opening day roster?

By Jack Harris

PHOENIX — As he walked off one of the Camelback Ranch backfields Monday morning, Dodgers triple-A manager Travis Barbary crossed paths with outfield prospect James Outman.

"Have a day, Outty!" Barbary exclaimed, fresh off watching the highly touted 25-year-old crush three home runs in a live batting practice session.

"I got one more, right?" Outman asked, jokingly.

Barbary laughed and shook his head.

"No," he said, glancing over the distant outfield fence Outman had repeatedly cleared with ease. "There's no more balls left."

Chalk it up as the latest stellar moment of Outman's standout spring — yet another resounding statement in the young slugger's bid to make the Dodgers' opening day team.

Coming into the season, Outman was seen as the top outfielder in the club's system, but also a player who still could benefit from more minor league seasoning.

He was, after all, just a few seasons removed from a massive overhaul of his mechanics. He had logged only 212 career at-bats in triple A, not reaching the minors' highest level until midway through last season.

And though he had impressed in a brief debut in the majors last July — hitting a home run in his first at-bat and going six for 13 in four games — he had also struck out seven times, a sign that holes remained in his revamped swing.

Still, that initial taste gave Outman a renewed craving for the big leagues.

"When he came back down ... I asked him, 'How was it?' " Barbary, who manages the organization's Oklahoma City affiliate, recalled this winter. "And he said, 'All I want to do is get back, and I'm going to do whatever it takes.' And he played great the rest of the year."

[See **Dodgers,** B7]

Kings score four in second
L.A. rides power-play goals from Doughty, Iafallo to a 5-2 victory over the Islanders. **B6**

Freeman hurts hamstring in WBC game
Dodgers slugger exits Canada's win at the World Baseball Classic and will be evaluated further. **B7**

Chargers make moves on Day 2
Pipkins, Kendricks get deals, Feiler is released, Ekeler gets OK to seek trade. **B8**

Los Angeles Times

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023 :: LATIMES.COM/CALENDAR

BENDELACREME

BENDELACREME found purpose in drag performance growing up. A wave of anti-drag bills now threatens that safe haven.

The show will go on

L.A. queens and members of the queer community share what's at stake as state legislatures across the country propose bans on drag.

By Candace Hansen

"I will not stop performing if I have to perform in a dumpster in a back alley," BenDeLaCreme says in a tone full of optimistic, comedic edge.

Before becoming "RuPaul's Drag Race" royalty, headlining sold-out shows and having her own Hulu special, drag queen BenDeLaCreme, also known as "DeLa," was a small-town queer kid struggling with depression and suicidal ideation. It was drag that saved her life.

"People ask me when I started doing drag, but I feel like I've sort of always been a drag queen," DeLa says. Growing up, she was inspired by the drag documentary "Wigstock" and hearing RuPaul's album "Supermodel of the World." "Those little peaks on the horizon were this glimmer of hope that kept me going," she says.

LIZ CABRERA

DRAG KING Bytch Nastee makes his shows age-appropriate without the law.

Today, DeLa's become that glimmer of hope for others. At a recent gig near her small hometown in Connecticut, she says a fan told her that her performances helped them survive.

If some Republican lawmakers have their way, drag shows like DeLa's might be illegal in a quarter of the U.S. by the end of 2023.

Earlier this month, Republican Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee signed [See **Drag,** E3]

ART REVIEW

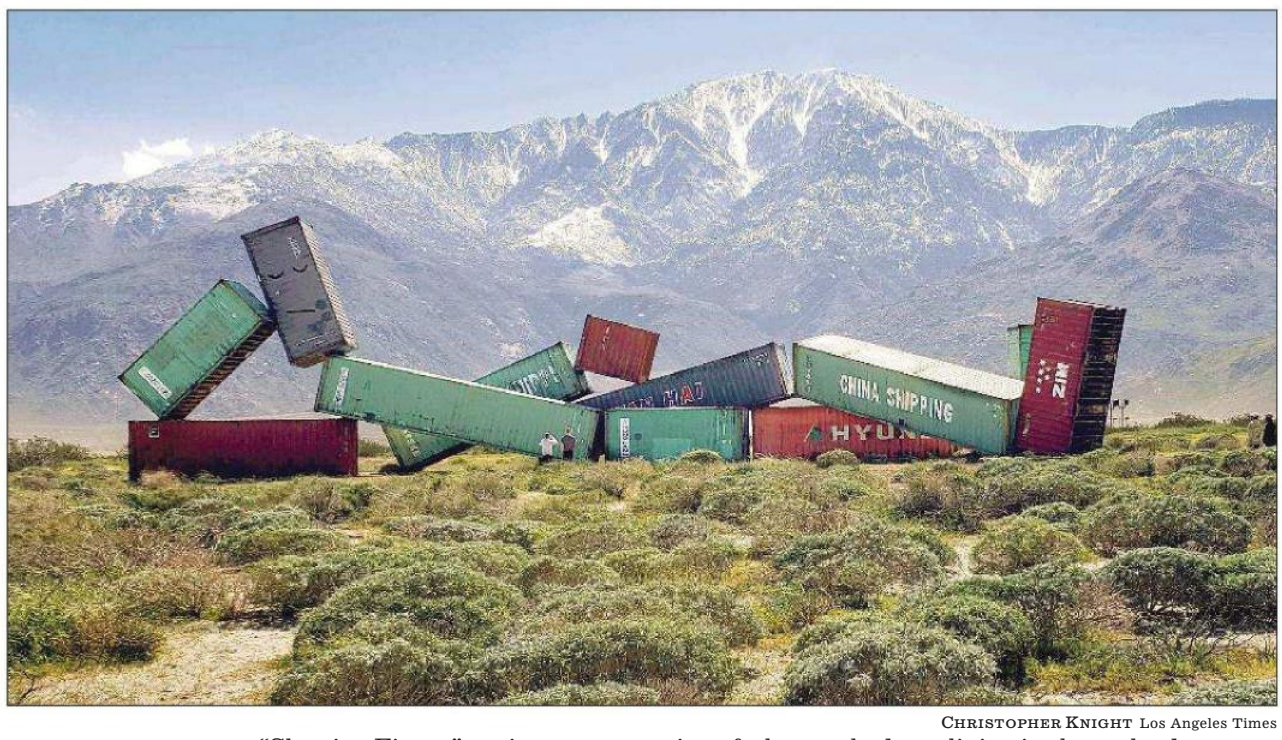
A witty work's pointed view at Desert X

Matt Johnson's pileup 'Sleeping Figure' steals the show in otherwise bland biennial.

CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT
ART CRITIC

The wind was whipping hard, blowing gritty clouds of sand across the landscape scrub at the edge of Palm Springs on opening day of Desert X 2023, the fourth installment of the Coachella Valley biennial exhibition of newly commissioned art. (Neville Wakefield and Diana Campbell are the curators.)

At moments during the nearly half-mile trek to the rugged site of Matt Johnson's massive sculpture, "Sleeping Figure," from a dusty parking area just off [See **Desert X,** E2]



CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Los Angeles Times

MATT JOHNSON'S "Sleeping Figure" conjures a suggestion of a human body reclining in the rocky desert.

WGA's voice in the room

Union members praise Ellen Stutzman, who's stepping in as chief contract negotiator.

By Anousha Sakoui

In the spring of 2017, during tense contract negotiations with the Writers Guild of America, about 60 negotiators gathered at the Sherman Oaks offices of the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

The union didn't like the studios' proposal on streaming residuals and turned to research guru Ellen Stutzman to explain why it would be bad for writers.

During her presentation at the bargaining table, Stutzman methodically laid out her union's position. The rebuttal was so convincing it is still remembered by her colleagues.

"It's a roomful of notetakers who just don't want to look you in the eye and don't have any interest in engaging with you, but she was impactful," recalled Patric M. Verrone, a member of the union's negotiating committee and a former guild president. "After seeing her make the presentation, it was as if she was born to do that sort of thing."

The vote of confidence in Stuzman comes two weeks after the guild announced that she would stand in for the WGA's chief negotiator, David Young, who was stepping down for health reasons.

The news stunned many in Hollywood. Young, a firebrand union leader who is known for his aggressive negotiating style, led the union during its strike in 2007-08. And some wondered whether his exit would leave the WGA without a strong leader ahead of crucial — and probably contentious — negotiations set to begin on Monday.

Colleagues describe Stutzman as more low-key and less combative than Young but say she is an effec-

[See **Stutzman,** E2]

'Last of Us' end? A toughie

The game's finale was divisive. TV version's is too, but somehow different, writers say.

By Tracy Brown and Todd Martens

This story contains spoilers for the first season of "The Last of Us."

One of the first hit TV shows of the year, HBO's "The Last of Us" has been hailed as one of the best video game adaptations ever.

The series, created by executive producers Craig Mazin and Neil Druckmann, is set in a post-apocalyptic America where humanity has been ravaged by a mutant fungus that turns those infected into mindless cannibals.

Sunday's finale saw Joel (Pedro Pascal), a grizzled survivor whose daughter was killed during the first day of the outbreak, and Ellie (Bella Ramsey), a teenager miraculously immune from infection, conclude their cross-country trek to a medical facility where they hope to help create a cure.

The season finale, as expected, has been divisive.

[See **'Last of Us,'** E6]

Praise for WGA's chief negotiator

[**Stutzman,** from E1]
tive negotiator who played an important role in the WGA's high-profile and successful campaign to curb practices by talent agents deemed harmful to writers.

"Ellen is smart, tough and suffers no fools; she will do what is right for the membership based on what our needs are," said one longtime WGA member who declined to be named because they were not authorized to comment.

In an interview Monday, Stutzman acknowledged the pressure ahead.

"We do have a big agenda this year. We've got a lot of issues that have been simmering for some period of time, and it's on me and the negotiating committee to deliver for the members, so that's a challenge in every negotiation," Stutzman told The Times.

She said she isn't planning a change in negotiating tactics or strategy.

"We go into negotiations with the backing of our members, and that's what ultimately gives the [negotiating] committee power and is the only thing that companies respond to, so I don't see it as a big change," she said.

From the WGA

ELLEN STUTZMAN steps in as talks loom.

Many guild members and leaders have expressed support for Stutzman and her team.

"I actually felt a great degree of comfort in knowing that she would be stepping up to be the lead negotiator," said Marc Guggenheim, showrunner for the TV series "Eli Stone" and "DC's Legends of Tomorrow." "She's very, very smart. She really cares about writers. Her command of the issues historically has always been incredibly strong."

A graduate of Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Stutzman, 40, has worked with the WGA for 17 years. After she graduated in 2004, Stutzman worked as a researcher and organizer for the SEIU-UHW.

She joined the Writers Guild of America West in 2006 as a research analyst. While employed at the union, Stutzman studied to obtain a master's degree from the UCLA Anderson School of Management.

Stutzman climbed the ranks at the union and in 2018 was tapped as assistant executive director. She oversaw agency, contracts, legal and research and public policy departments of the union.

"She's adept at discussing both big-picture industry trends and the minutiae of [minimum basic agreement] contract language," said John August, a former board member and current negotiating committee member. "There's not a person better qualified on the planet to take this role."

August cited the important role that Stutzman played in the last three bargaining rounds as well as the WGA's fierce fight with talent agencies over packaging fees and affiliated productions.

During that campaign, Stutzman was known for educating members about agency financing, including the role of private equity investments in that business.

"Very few writers are going to be familiar with how private equity works, so it was important for her to explain what returns private equity investors were looking for when buying into agencies," August said.

Thousands of writers "fired" their agents in 2019 to protest packaging fees and other practices. At one point, Young engaged in a war of words with William Morris Endeavor partner Rick Rosen, who accused Young of threatening him, a claim he denied.

Stutzman took a different approach.

"When we were in the room negotiating with the agencies, she was polite but direct about why we felt their ownership structure represented an unbridgeable conflict of interest," August said.

The WGA won that fight, with agencies agreeing to ditch packaging fees for assembling projects and to reduce their ownership stakes in affiliated productions to no more than 20%.

In recent weeks, Stutzman and other guild leaders have been meeting with members to discuss bargaining priorities. On Feb. 23 at Universal City's Sheraton hotel, Stutzman gave a presentation to writers, with negotiating committee co-Chair Chris Keyser, about proposals the union planned to present to studios.

"She's very patient, very engaged," said one guild captain who attended the meeting but was not authorized to comment.

Stutzman stands out for her deep knowledge, said Verrone, citing her presentations in 2014 to members of Congress over the union's opposition to the Comcast-Time Warner merger.

"She's certainly the best-briefed [person in the room] and has the facts and figures at her fingertips, which I always found invaluable," Verrone said. "She's been behind the scenes of almost every one of our battles in the last 17 years."

Visual pileup of art

[**Desert X,** from E1]
the I-10 near the Palm Springs turnoff at Highway 111, it was difficult to stand upright. The sturdy sculpture, however, didn't budge an inch.

A dozen salvaged railway freight cars are securely welded in place, end to end and, in some places, piled high. The topsy-turvy forms conjure a surprise suggestion of a human body casually reclining in the rocky field. It's an industrial-strength pastoral, the artistic genre that used to signal the dominion of humankind over nature.

Here, however, the dramatic gesture is more ambiguous. The splendid colossus takes on the mythologies of land art unique to the West in the last half-century, at once celebrating and questioning the vaunted legacy of artists like Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Nancy Holt and Walter De Maria, whose monumental sculptures reside in desert sites from Utah to New Mexico.

And it artfully raises the stinging issue that has plagued Desert X since 2019. That's when organizers, apparently indifferent to the state-led murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi, regrettably forged a working relationship with Saudi Arabia, the vicious and repressive absolute monarchy where free speech is illegal.

That arrangement badly damaged the biennial's reputation. Prominent Desert X board members quit in protest, including artist Ed Ruscha, who for decades has had a getaway in nearby Pioneertown. Despite the outcry, the pact has led to two Saudi desert exhibitions, the most recent in 2022.

"Sleeping Figure" is not just the most compelling entry in the current iteration of the biennial, an otherwise bland affair featuring a dozen works, few of which do much to reward the considerable effort to see them. (Be prepared for a 50-mile trek to get to all 12 sites, most scattered between Desert Hot Springs and Palm Desert and at the same locations as works from prior years.) Of the 59 commissions produced since the series launched in 2017, Johnson's sculpture is among the very best.

The freight cars' jaggedly rising and falling composition echoes the craggily beautiful backdrop of the San Jacinto mountain range. Its slam-bang visual pileup plays against a long, steady stream of freight trains rolling past behind it, day and night, in a manufactured river transferring tons of cargo from the Port of Los Angeles to distribution centers to the east. Inevitably, if coincidentally, disasters like last month's toxic freight-train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, come to mind, as does the historic mix of staggering prosperity and shameful ruin that the railroads brought to the building of America.

Unexpectedly, given the enormous sculptural materials and their social history, the rise and fall of shapes make for a light, airy, porous reclining body, its head resting on a hand at the end of a propped arm, while one leg is casually crossed over the other. Given a standard freight-car length of 50 or 60 feet, the colossus stretches out to nearly two-thirds the span of a football field.

It's not the artist's first such composition. Six years ago, for example, Johnson, who works in Los Angeles, made a similarly posed figure for a tabletop. That witty sculpture's limbs and torso are carved and painted to look like sustaining loaves of bread. "Take, eat," the cigar-chomping bread figure cheekily implies; "this is my body."

The recumbent body built from freight cars is without gender, although typically in art a reclining figure is female. Think of assorted voluptuous, sleeping Venuses by Titian or Giorgione, languorous nudes that are like some exquisite Renaissance Playboy centerfold designed for the private gratification of an inevitably male patron. Édouard Manet gave a Modern jolt to the tradition, juxtaposing a nude woman with some fully clothed men picnicking in a wooded park for his painting "Luncheon on the Grass," and sitting the nude sex worker in "Olympia" bolt-upright on a daybed, staring down the viewer.

Ingres and Matisse transformed the reclining body into an odalisque, dressing their women in sheer harem pants and silk turbans, decorating them with bejeweled peacock-feather fans. The reclining female nude was stereotyped as "exotic," a patronizing Orientalist motif fueled by aggressive Near Eastern exploits of 19th century European colonial powers. She was to be taken, like a foreign territory, subjugated to a greater power's desires.

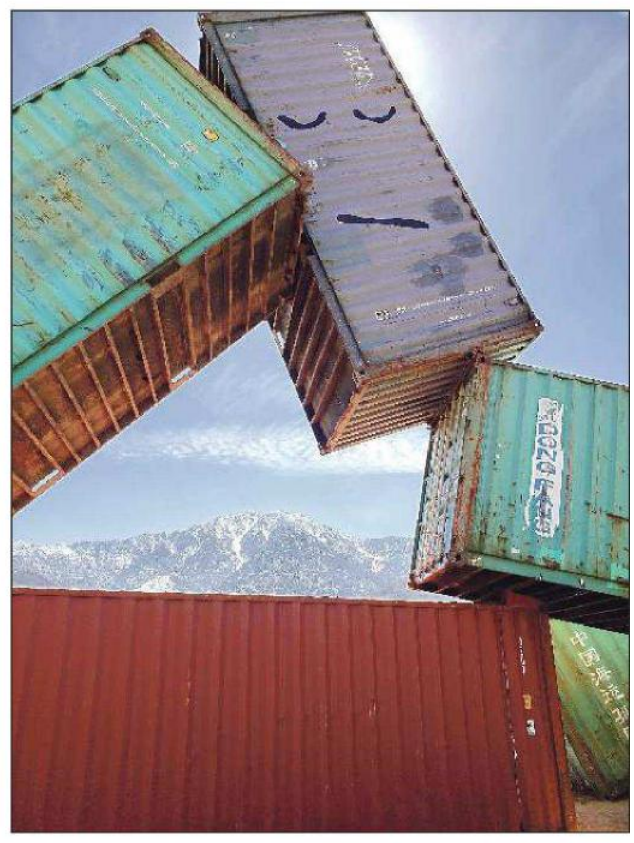
Johnson's "Sleeping Figure" is a mercantile odalisque, draped in Orientalist trappings of corporate Asia that are announced by prominent commercial names painted on the railway containers' sides — Hyundai, Dongfang, Zim, China Shipping and more. The sculpture's gender ambiguity ribs our habit of projecting comforting feminine traits onto the landscape — think Mother Nature — a habit with which we give ourselves permission to take advantage of it. In a globalist world, who knows who is taking advantage of whom?

Johnson's reclining metal torso punctured with holes and set in an actual landscape also recalls the primordial bones of Henry Moore bronzes scattered across Britain's Hertfordshire countryside. Moore's organic shapes are changed into Minimalist boxes, updating a romantic sculptural legacy into something akin to a Hasbro Transformer. Johnson's composition, regardless of all that tonnage, feels almost toy-like, as if made by a kid playing with blocks.

Check out the figure's head: It features a rudimentary face defined by an angular slash for a mouth, topped by a pair of painted arcs for closed eyes. The pictogram is a clever cross between two digital Unicode signs — the arcs denoting slumber, the slash designating confusion. The "sleep of reason" is made into an emoji. Machine forms collide with digital fictions to compose a corporate odalisque now in bed with the vast "Oriental" wealth of Saudi criminals. Culture eclipses nature, despite the wild and enveloping desert environment.

Johnson's crack-up inserts a nagging question mark into the very idea of mammoth land-art projects. They're rife with boy's toys meant to last an eternity, like the milelong Minimalist temple complex of Heizer's "City," recently opened to accommodate six visitors a day (at $150 a pop) in remote Nevada, or James Turrell's grandiose sky observatory in an extinct volcano at the edge of Arizona's Painted Desert, still unfinished after more than 40 years' labor and hundreds of millions of dollars spent.

As an emblem for Desert X and its decadent embrace of Saudi thugs, an Orientalist train wreck is hard to beat. Johnson's "Sleeping Figure" steals the show. And when's the last time land art made you laugh out loud?



CHRISTOPHER KNIGHT Los Angeles Times

THE EMOJI-LIKE face of "Sleeping Figure's" genderless subject suggests both slumber and confusion.

Blum & Poe

MATT JOHNSON'S witty "Bread Figure (Reclining)," 2017, is for a tabletop but strikes a similar pose.

Desert X 2023

Where: Throughout the Coachella Valley
When: Through May 7
Info: Maps and app available at *desertx.org*

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ROYAL — 11523 Santa Monica Blvd. — West L.A.
INFINITE SEA 4:30 PM
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - DOCUMENTARY 1:00 6:40
PACIFICTION 4:00 PM
RETURN TO SEOUL R 1:10 4:10 7:10
EO 1:40 7:30
SHORT FILM PROGRAM *THE RECALL* NR 1:00 PM

MONICA — 1332 Second Street — Santa Monica
THE QUIET GIRL PG-13 1:10 4:20 7:10
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - ANIMATION 1:30 7:30
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - LIVE-ACTION 1:00 7:00
CLOSE PG-13 1:20 7:10
WOMEN TALKING PG-13 4:10 PM
LIVING PG-13 1:30 7:20
THE WHALE R 1:00 7:00
AFTERSUN R 4:30 PM
TO LESLIE R 4:00 PM
TRIANGLE OF SADNESS R 3:45 PM
TÁR R 4:00 PM

TOWN CENTER — 17200 Ventura Blvd. — Encino
UNICORN WARS 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35
CREED III PG-13 1:00 4:00 7:00
THE QUIET GIRL PG-13 1:30 4:30 7:20
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - ANIMATION 1:20 7:10
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - LIVE-ACTION 1:10 7:00
CLOSE PG-13 4:20 PM
LIVING PG-13 4:10 PM

NEWHALL — 22500 Lyons Ave. — Santa Clarita
65 PG-13 12:55 3:10 5:25 7:40
CHAMPIONS PG-13 1:00 4:00 7:00
SCREAM VI R 1:10 4:10 7:10
CREED III PG-13 1:20 4:20 7:10
OPERATION FORTUNE: RUSE DE GUERRE R 1:20 4:20 7:20
COCAINE BEAR R 1:30 4:30 7:30
ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: QUANTUMANIA PG-13 1:00 4:00 7:00

GLENDALE — 207 N. Maryland Ave — Glendale
PUNCH 4:20 PM
THERAPY DOGS 1:30 7:10
CREED III PG-13 1:10 4:10 7:20
THE QUIET GIRL PG-13 1:20 4:40 7:30
2023 OSCAR NOMINATED SHORT FILMS - DOCUMENTARY 1:00 6:40
RETURN TO SEOUL R *SUBTITLED IN ENGLISH;* 1:00 7:00
LIVING PG-13 4:30 PM
THE LAKE 4:00 PM

NoHo 7 — 5240 Lankershim Blvd. — No. Hollywood
65 PG-13 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:40
CHAMPIONS PG-13 1:00 4:00 7:10
THE MAGIC FLUTE 1:10 7:10
THE RITUAL KILLER 4:30 PM
SCREAM VI R 1:00 4:00 7:00
CREED III PG-13 1:20 4:20 7:20
OPERATION FORTUNE: RUSE DE GUERRE R 1:20 4:10 7:00
COCAINE BEAR R 1:30 4:30 7:30

CLAREMONT — 450 W. 2nd Street — Claremont
65 PG-13 12:55 3:10 5:25 7:40
THE MAGIC FLUTE 4:00 PM
SCREAM VI R 1:10 4:10 7:10
CREED III PG-13 1:00 4:20 7:20
COCAINE BEAR R 1:30 4:30 7:30
THE QUIET GIRL PG-13 1:20 7:00

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Queer lifeline under threat

Liz Cabrera

JOSIE WRECK canceled a Tennessee tour date due to the state's anti-drag bills.

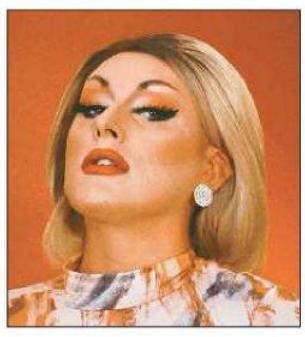
[**Drag,** from E1]
into law SB003, which criminalizes drag performances in public or in any location within 1,000 feet of a school, church or park at any time of day that a minor may see — even through a window. On the same day he also passed SB001, which criminalizes gender-affirming care for trans youth, defining surgeries and hormone treatment as child abuse. Currently, 18 other states have introduced similar bills.

The "drag ban," as these laws have been referred to, despite not explicitly mentioning the art of drag, applies to a broad and vague categorization of performances done by "male or female impersonators" that contain "adult content" in the name of protecting children.

Members of the L.A. queer community say that drag shows, music and performances and other lifelines for queer youth and queer adults are under attack.

Local drag performer and member of the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council Maebe A. Girl warns that these bills may be a signal for national policy to come.

"These are very thinly veiled attacks, this very clear dog whistle is a clear call for genocide of trans people," she says. "The bills that have been advancing through state legislatures across the U.S., and even bills introduced to the federal level, increasingly seek to limit the liberties of LGBTQIA people. It has nothing to do with children. They want LGBTQIA people out of sight, out of mind."



Emily Eizen

MAEBE A. GIRL is a performer and politician.

TROUBLING TREND

California may not have any current anti-LGBTQ bills, but L.A. is not immune to the wave of anti-trans and anti-queer backlash nationwide. In the last few weeks, the LGBTQ Center Long Beach and Folklore Salon had windows broken over their pride flags, Huntington Beach banned flying the pride flag at City Hall and trans musician Josie Wreck was violently attacked at a nightclub. Additionally, local drag queens and entertainment professionals have announced these laws affect their businesses. World of Wonder, the L.A. production company behind "RuPaul's Drag Race," launched a Drag Defense Fund to support queens on the ground targeted for their art.

Performers and queer people in Tennessee, as well as touring entertainers, are anxious about how anti-drag bills will be enforced and their implications on the arts, queer life and 1st Amendment rights. L.A.-based trans musicians, comedians, and performance artists, along with drag artists of many genders, have to consider the risks of traveling to states with drag bans, and many are reconsidering plans for performing in the state of Tennessee in the wake of SB003.

The definition "adult content" presented in Tennessee's SB003 is vague and up for interpretation. Tennessee lawmaker Chris Todd said in early hearings that he believed that a "fully clothed" drag performer who was viewed accidentally through the window of a party bus by a minor should be arrested.

After public outcry over the drag ban, Tennessee amended SB003, adding that the performance of an "actual or simulated sexual activity, removal of articles of clothes or appearing unclothed" must have occurred for the performer to be charged. The definition of "male and female impersonators" listed beside strippers and exotic dancers is vague and inherently categorizes drag queens, transgender people and expansive expressions of gender in public as sexually explicit. There has been no mention of enforcement of SB003 against mainstream heterosexual pop stars who may incorporate sexually suggestive choreography in public.

"Drag is an intersection of an art practice and an identity," DeLa says, noting that it's in drag when she feels her truest self as a person whose gender is complex and very nonbinary. Maebe A. Girl, who is currently running for Congress, says that "when a bill attacks drag performers it also affects trans people, because it's based on your assigned gender at birth." She notes that these types of bills will affect not just entertainment, but could possibly be applied to queer and trans people running for public office.

Hostile anti-queer and anti-trans rhetoric has become an active part of culture war policy making. Last week, a wave of new bills were introduced, including a Florida bill that threatens to take trans children away from parents who support their transition and a Tennessee bill that guts marriage equality despite federal protections. The ACLU is currently tracking 399 anti-LGBTQ bills introduced to U.S. courts.

Many trans people's worst fears became evident after footage of last weekend's CPAC — the Conservative Political Action Coalition — hit the internet. The conference, which advertises itself as the largest and most influential gathering of conservatives in the world, included appearances by former Trump advisor Sebastian Gorka, who said that Democrats who support trans rights are "mutilating boys and girls," and Daily Wire host Michael Knowles, who argued that being trans is "false" and that "for the good of society and especially for the good people who have fallen prey to this confusion, *transgenderism* must be eradicated from public life entirely at every level."

Drag and live queer performing arts have been a lifeline for World of Wonder's founder Randy Barbato, completely changing his life. Before founding the film production company and going on to produce iconic queer film and TV like "Party Monster" and "RuPaul's Drag Race," Barbato says, he would ditch "pretentious editing classes" at NYU to attend happy hour drag shows in the East Village of Manhattan in the 1980s.

It was here that the seeds of World of Wonder were sown as, along with business partner Fenton Bailey, Barbato fell in love with drag influenced by iconic drag queens like Lady Bunny, Lip Synca, Taboo and Ethyl Eichelberger. "They opened us up to a new world," Barbato says . It was at this time that Barbato and Bailey became close to RuPaul. "We used to joke like, 'Oh my God, could you imagine if Ru became a star and if we can help in some way? The world would be a different place.'"

In many ways, "RuPaul's Drag Race" has made the world a different place. It shifted cultural understandings of drag, making it more accessible and providing much-needed queer and trans representation to individuals who lack that in their immediate communities and families. Event spinoffs like RuPaul's Drag Con host events in Los Angeles, New York and London.

"Whether you're straight or gay, it's our humanity that we're fighting for right now," Barbato says, "that's what 'Drag Race' is all about. It's about hair, heels, attitude and having a great time. I watch it with my kids every Friday night because it's educating them about how to treat other people, about what we all have in common, and about the freedom to express themselves. Its the flip side of what this right-wing messaging is all about."

FIGHTING BACK

In response to the anti-drag legislation, World of Wonder created the first-ever Drag Defense Fund, a 501(c)(3) to support the ACLU's work to defend and ensure LGBTQ rights with significant donations from MTV and "RuPaul's Drag Race."

RuPaul lent her voice to the announcement of the Drag Defense Fund, adding that "bullies are incompetent at solving real issues. They look for easy targets so they can give the impression of being effective, they think our love, light, laughter and our joy are signs of weakness, but they're wrong because that is our strength."

Barbato's intention is to help queens and other trans and gender-expansive performers on the ground in states that ban or criminalize their art. "The louder we can be, the more present we can be — we just have to believe that we can win this."

This isn't just an issue for Tennessee and states with active anti-LGBTQ bills. The rise in anti-queer and trans rhetoric and legislation has implications here in Los Angeles.

Incidents of vandalism and attacks on queer businesses like Folklore have been on the rise nationally. Additionally, the salon has recently started receiving hateful phone calls.

"Folklore is a salon and barber shop that is also a symbol of the LGBT community," says salon owner Pony Lee.

In addition to running two salons, Lee runs Cruise L.A., a leather community space for queer people who don't fit into the cisgender gay male-dominated leather scene in L.A.

"The foundation of punk rock — [is] that fundamental [feeling of] wanting change — Cruise L.A. is definitely a symbol of that, just like Folklore," Lee says.

Despite the vandalism, Lee isn't backing down. Haircuts are booked out months in advance for most of Folklore's stylists. A new window is being installed in the historic building, and a new installment of Cruise L.A. is underway. "To be targeted feels like we've gone a century backwards. After so many decades of living and constantly fighting, it sucks that we're here again."

Josie Wreck, a transgender first-generation Chicana chanteuse, was targeted in a violent anti-trans attack at an after-hours goth club in Los Angeles in February by a man who harassed her nearly 10 years ago for being a vocal trans feminist in the music scene. She sees the attack as connected to the recent rise in anti-trans hate.

"Violence for being who I am, before I even knew why I was targeted, is something I've known my whole life," Wreck says. "I've always actively resisted living in fear, no matter how scary things are. Being in the closet was not a viable option for me."

Booking her own shows and events in Orange County and L.A., Wreck has contributed to the trans and feminist-centric yearly event Grrl Fair, the Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls Orange County and currently runs her queer-centric production company Aural Displeasure.

"Performing music saves my life," Wreck says. "Connecting with others who make music has saved my life. I always tell people what a huge rich network of radical queer and trans and drag and femme and allies I am a part of. Because we need it to survive. We have no choice but to express ourselves and to hold space for each other and for ourselves. There's no option but to continue being who we are."

Wreck was set to tour this summer with plans to perform with a close friend in Chattanooga, Tenn., as well as some dates on the East Coast. However, because of legislation surrounding performance and bills that criminalize bathroom use by trans people, she is changing her plans. "I don't feel that Tennessee is in the future right now," she says.

A WARNING

While legislation hasn't legally affected average queer Angelenos yet, Maebe A. Girl warns that everyone should be paying attention. "The impact of [these bills] is going to gradually add up. We're going to see a mass migration of LGBTQIA people to blue states," she says . "Or we may see federal legislation trying to ban and limit drag and performance, and ban gender-affirming healthcare. This is the onset of fascism." Currently South Carolina, Kansas and Oklahoma have all filed bills to limit trans healthcare for adults.

"Speaking as a trans person, this is terrifying," Gus Lanza says. Lanza is DeLa's husband and business manager who handles behind-the-scenes aspects of her drag career at home and on tour. "Understanding the makeup of our Supreme Court, one can only assume that lawmakers are trying to put forth restrictive and extreme bills knowing they will be challenged and work their way through sympathetic conservative lower courts and eventually land at the Supreme Court. [In the wake of Roe vs. Wade,] we all know how that's gonna go."

Attacks on drag and queer performance are often framed at their core as concerns about children, concerns that most drag performers argue are unfounded.

"On one end, we have naked performers twerking, on the other end, we have children in libraries hearing storybooks, but there's this whole spectrum in between that we're not talking about," DeLa says, bringing up her "Jinkx and DeLa Holiday Show" that incorporates some adult conversations with important messages about chosen family and mental health that DeLa wishes she could have heard as a kid.

"Ultimately, I would really like kids to get these messages. At the same time, I am no more interested in parenting your children than I am interested in having the government parent your children. If you don't want them to come, fine. Children are not notoriously good audience members."

Q Gill-Dyangko, who goes by the drag name Bytch Nastee, is a local transgender drag king who is on the sexier end of the drag spectrum, blending live singing, classic drag and burlesque. While he is against bills that limit the arts, he agrees that there should be considerations for burlesque-oriented drag performers in the presence of children, something he already does without government intervention.

"There are some general guidelines that could keep everybody in a safe space," he says, noting that announcements at events can instruct families with children to avoid the stage.

"Not every drag artist gets naked and shakes their a— everywhere," he adds. "We want to give people a good show, and we are trying to be aware of what we're presenting in front of children."

While there is a lot to fear in the wake of this legislation, DeLa says queer arts have always been a lifeline and will continue to be, even if pushed back into the underground.

"Queer people are fighters," DeLa says. "Laws didn't stop us then and they won't stop us now. I am not going to go away. We will not be squashed."

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COMICS

SUDOKU

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7			6		9		1	
1								4
		7	2		4			
			8					
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						6		

Level: Gentle

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2	7	4	8	3	1	9	5	6
8	3	6	5	9	2	7	4	1
4	1	9	2	6	5	3	7	8
5	6	7	3	1	8	2	9	4
3	8	2	9	7	4	6	1	5

3	6	5	4	1	2
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6	1	3	2	4	5
1	2	4	6	5	3
5	3	6	1	2	4

3/15/23

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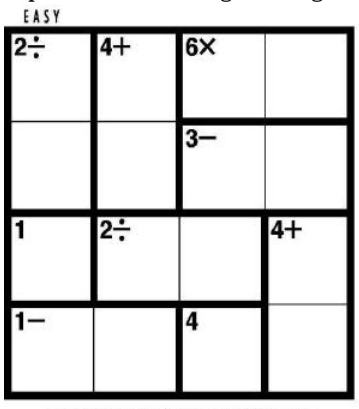
Solutions to Tuesday's puzzles

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 or 2-by-3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 (or 1 to 6 for the smaller grid). For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit *www.sudoku.org.uk*.

KENKEN

Every box will contain a number; numbers depend on the size of the grid. For a 6x6 puzzle, use Nos. 1-6. Do not repeat a number in any row or column. The numbers in each heavily outlined set of squares must combine to produce the target number found in the top left corner of the cage using the mathematical operation indicated. A number can be repeated within a cage as long as it is not in the same row or column.

EASY



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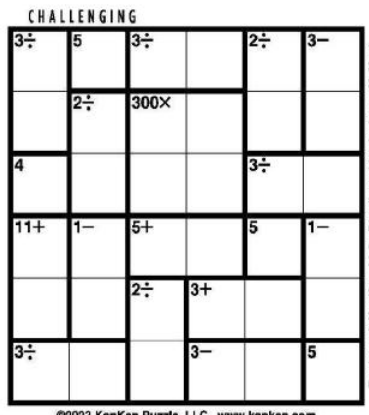
CHALLENGING



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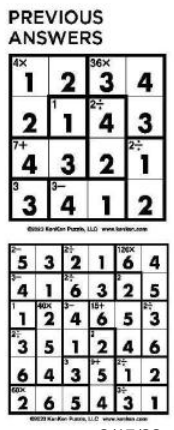
PREVIOUS ANSWERS



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3/15/23

HOROSCOPE

By Holiday Mathis

Aries (March 21-April 19): Beware of wanting so intensely that you actually push the object of your desire further away from you.

Taurus (April 20-May 20): The size of the commitment doesn't matter today. Fortune favors you as you deliver on big and small agreements alike.

Gemini (May 21-June 21): Everything you do and touch has your energy in it. As you tend to and lift yourself, you lift the world.

Cancer (June 22-July 22): You prefer not to ask favors, though sometimes it's politically better to do this. People like most the people they help.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): While you can't control the decisions of others, you can influence them with your steadfast example and calm handling of business.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): These days you choose your friends carefully. Each relationship is a world and every world an influence on those who enter.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23): Body language, tone, timing, inflection, context and more are what give the fullest meaning today.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21): Certain people can't be pleased. Their favorite mode is finicky. This allows them to feel in control. Don't take it personally.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You're seeing the scene differently from others, so who is right? Consider what everyone is looking through.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll feel the presence of one you know so deeply it's as though you are woven together with the threads of infinity.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll play with opposites today to fantastic effect.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20): You'll be so good at reading and responding to what the situation needs that nearly everyone will feel safe, calm and logical around you.

Today's birthday (March 15): Welcome to your year of savoring. The sensory world opens new channels for you and you'll have fresh favorites in many areas including food, places, music and people. Personal development efforts pay off with better connections and professional advancement. More highlights: You'll follow a map to treasure; you'll get the coaching or incentives you need to nab a challenging achievement; and you'll make lighthearted alterations that attract fun people. Libra and Sagittarius adore you. Your lucky numbers: 1, 4, 44, 17 and 30.

Mathis writes her column for Creators Syndicate Inc. The horoscope should be read for entertainment.

CROSSWORD

Edited By Patti Varol and Joyce Nichols Lewis
By Prasanna Keshava

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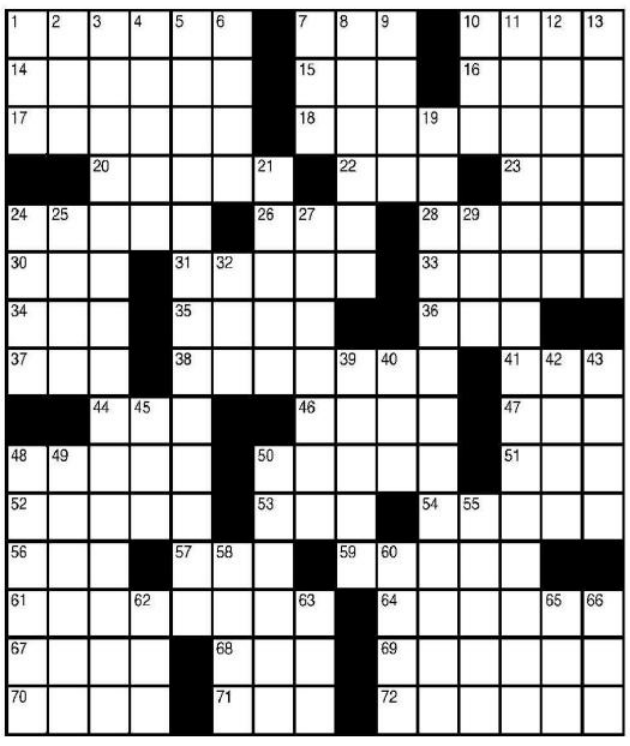

ACROSS
1 Meal
7 Near mist?
10 Old PCs
14 Syria's most populous city
15 "Blessed __ the peacemakers"
16 Large number
17 Accepts a driver's offer
18 Cell boundary
20 Quick kisses
22 Corvallis sch.
23 Windy City commuter org.
24 The ones here
26 Comedian Margaret
28 "Sweet Love" singer Anita
30 __ Lingus
31 Bangkok residents
33 Data units
34 "And there you have it!"
35 Suspend
36 Inouye Airport arrival gift
37 __ Lanka
38 Trisected
41 "You get the idea" abbr.
44 Religious woman
46 Glossary entry
47 Long, long __
48 Remove one's username from, on social media
50 Comedian Anne featured in Jerry Stiller's memoir "Married to Laughter"
51 Aromatic tree
52 Areas that may be irritated by shirt tags
53 Sculling need
54 __ macchiato
56 K-12 support gp.
57 Volodymyr Zelenskyy's country: Abbr.
59 Conductor Zubin
61 Devices for reproducing signatures
64 __ star
67 Old PC screens
68 Narrow waterway
69 Get-up-and-go
70 Florida vacation destination
71 Stop on the road
72 __ tickets

DOWN
1 "Yay, team!"
2 "Xanadu" gp.
3 "Peanuts" girl who calls Charlie Brown "Chuck"
4 Cathedral niches
5 Add interest
6 Honky-__
7 Mom, dad, sibs, etc.
8 Cookies for breakfast?
9 Tiara twinklers
10 Syr. neighbor
11 Formal social events
12 Protégé
13 Takes an oath
19 Party device filled with liquid soap
21 Barely enough
24 Bar bills
25 Pick up
27 British afternoon tradition, and what this puzzle's four longest answers literally have?
29 "Yes," on Talk Like a Pirate Day
32 "The Summer I Turned Pretty" novelist Jenny
39 Break a peace treaty, perhaps
40 Make a mistake
42 Pre-weekend shout
43 Center
45 Dubai's fed.
48 Prepare to stay a couple nights, say
49 Inherent character
50 Informal greeting
55 Clueless
58 "The Americans" star Russell
60 "¿De dónde __?"
62 WWII spy org.
63 Word with Jose or Juan
65 Private aid prog.
66 OB-__: med. specialty

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

B	L	I	P	S	■	A	S	T	I	R	■	T	I	P	S
A	E	S	O	P	■	S	H	O	N	E	■	E	M	I	T
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B	U	N	T	■	A	L	K	A	■	S	H	E	S	■	■
O	B	O	E	■	■	T	A	P	■	S	E	D	E	R	S
B	E	T	■	S	N	O	W	P	L	O	W	■	B	U	S
A	R	E	T	H	A	■	A	L	I	■	■	G	U	N	N
■	■	T	H	A	N	■	Y	E	L	P	■	R	Y	E	S
K	N	O	W	H	O	W	■	S	A	R	G	E	■	■	■
R	O	S	A	■	■	A	P	T	■	E	L	M	S	T	■
U	S	E	R	■	T	H	R	O	W	P	I	L	L	O	W
M	E	L	T	■	M	O	O	R	E	■	D	I	E	T	S
P	D	F	S	■	C	O	M	E	T	■	E	N	D	O	W

3/15/23

BRIDGE

By Frank Stewart

"I won't say my partner is opinionated," a club player told me, "but he dispenses advice by the bushel and takes it by the grain."

He showed me today's deal. "I was South and opened 1NT. My partner used Stayman and raised my two spades to three. I went on to game. West led the 10 of clubs, and when I saw dummy, I was appalled."

East returned a club at Trick Two. Declarer ruffed in dummy, led a trump to his queen, returned a diamond to dummy's king, finessed with the jack of trumps and cashed the ace.

"I next led the A-K and a third heart," South said. "East won and led another club, forcing out my last trump, and after I took my good heart, West won the last two tricks. My partner said he made a winning bid. I think he's nuts."

North's two-club bid wouldn't have occurred to me, but South could make four spades. After his second trump finesse wins, he must play three rounds of hearts, not taking the ace of trumps. East has no winning return.

You hold: ♠ A Q J 7 ♥ A K 5 3 ♦ Q 10 4 ♣ J 5. The dealer, at your right, opens three clubs. You double, and your partner bids three hearts. The opponents pass. What do you say?

Answer: Your double obliged your partner to act at the three level, hence you promised a hand worth at least 17 points. Since you have no more than that (jack of clubs is a worthless point), pass. If partner had a promising hand, he could have jumped to four hearts.

South dealer
N-S vulnerable

NORTH
♠ 8 5 4 2
♥ 9 6 4 2
♦ K 6 5 2
♣ K

WEST
♠ 9 6
♥ J 8
♦ A 7 3
♣ Q 10 9 8 4 3

EAST
♠ K 10 3
♥ Q 10 7
♦ J 9 8
♣ A 7 6 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q J 7
♥ A K 5 3
♦ Q 10 4
♣ J 5

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 NT	Pass	2♣	Pass
2♠	Pass	3♠	Pass
4♠	All Pass		

Opening lead – ♣ 10

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ASK AMY

Disengaging, not ghosting

Dear Amy: Several years ago, my daughter had a preschool teacher she loved who was fired for what seemed a dubious reason.

I related to her predicament, and I met up with her a couple of times in the immediate aftermath so my daughter could see her and to talk about the situation.

I did not expect to develop a long-term friendship with her.

Since that time, she has contacted me sporadically, whenever she is in a difficult emotional situation.

We are not friends, and she only contacts me when she's having an emergency. Then it's urgent, at weird times, and time-consuming.

She is married and has family and friends. I'm not even close enough with her to recommend that she see a therapist.

The most recent time this occurred, I hadn't heard from her in about a year. She asked if we could meet and I told her I was busy preparing for some travel, and we'd have to schedule another time. She ignored this and tried repeatedly to contact me while I was out of town.

I'm a busy professional with a family and my own relationships to manage.

I would never "ghost" someone, but I was never friends with this person in the first place, and she's ignoring my boundaries. Is it OK if I just ignore her?

Not a Therapist

Dear Not: You don't mention the content of the contact this person is pestering you with. If she is emailing or texting asking for advice and you don't want to engage, you can respond, politely, "I'm sorry I can't help you with this. I hope you find some resolution!"

If she contacts you wanting to get together, and you've already told her that you aren't available, she needs to reread her previous messages and get a clue.

You invited her to reschedule but then decided to end the relationship instead. If she asks to get together, you can say: "Sorry, but I'll have to decline. Life is getting in the way."

After that, you might have to be more direct.

Dear Amy: I've been with "Bobby" for two years.

We got married last year (very quietly) but haven't done the celebration part yet with family and friends.

We are planning our celebration and will hold it in four months.

My husband's sister (my new sister-in-law) hasn't congratulated us or given us anything like a card or gift.

Maybe she will do these things at the actual celebration, but I'm not sure.

Do you think she has a problem with us getting married? Or do you think she has a problem with me?

Concerned

Dear Concerned: The way you describe this relationship, you are obviously insecure about it. Perhaps you don't know your husband's sister very well, or you've had limited or negative interactions with her.

Consider asking her advice about an aspect of the wedding planning. If appropriate, you might offer her a role in the wedding itself.

If she responds to your bids rudely, coldly or not at all, assume that she has a problem either with you, her brother or the larger world.

If you've done nothing to inspire her behavior, don't take it personally!

If you are able to use this experience to acquire the extremely important skill of not taking things personally, I'd say this would be your sister-in-law's lasting and valuable wedding gift to you.

Email questions to Amy Dickinson at *askamy@amydickinson.com*.

FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil Keane

"I brought this home from the party for you, Mommy. It used to be a cookie."

DENNIS THE MENACE By Hank Ketcham

REPLY ALL LITE By Donna Lewis

I'm looking for the credit card that comes to your house and finds money in the cushions.
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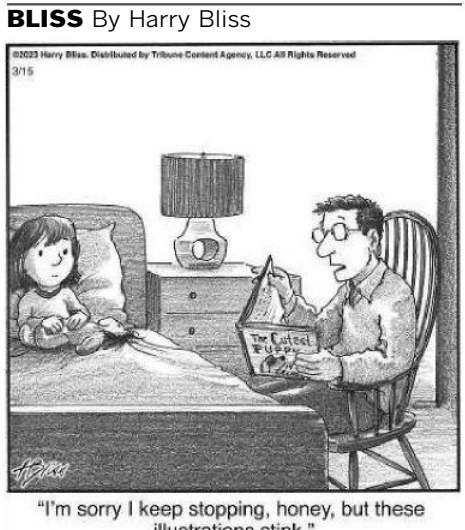
www.replyallcomic.com
3-15

MARMADUKE By Brad & Paul Anderson

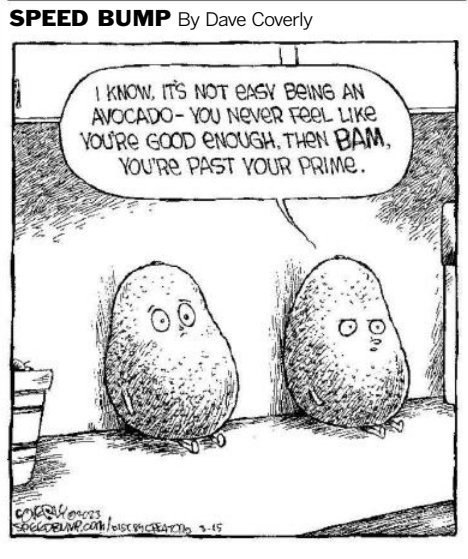
"What have you done with the roofers?"

BLISS By Harry Bliss



"I'm sorry I keep stopping, honey, but these illustrations stink."

SPEED BUMP By Dave Coverly



COMICS

LA CUCARACHA By Lalo Alcaraz

MAKE WAY FOR THE DEITY OF RAIN!
SENIOR TICKETS FOR TWO.
MUSEO
NO! WE ARE COSMIC ENTITIES, FAR BEYOND YOUR COMPREHENSION.
BUT WITH THESE TICKETS...
YOU GET TO SKIP THE LINE AT THE BUFFET.
YOU'VE EARNED YOUR PLACE IN THE AFTERLIFE!
MUSEO

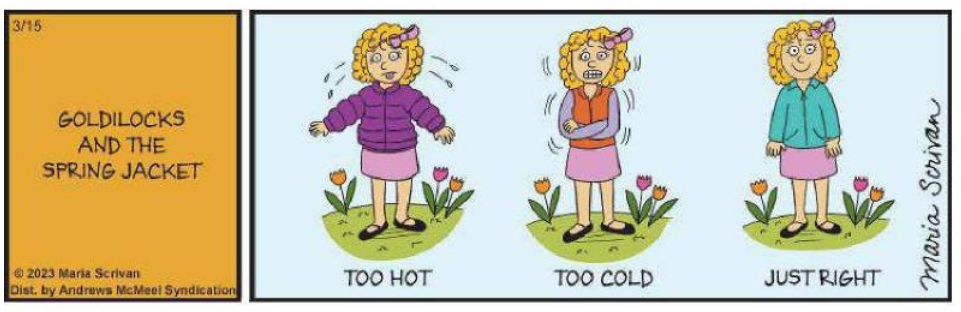
CRABGRASS By Tauhid Bondia

YOU EVER FLY ON A PLANE BEFORE?
YEAH, ONCE. BACK WHEN WE MOVED HERE FROM NEW YORK.
WAS IT COOL?
IT'S THE BEST!
IT'S KIND OF EYE-OPENING TO SEE THE WORLD FROM UP IN THE CLOUDS. IT REALLY CHANGES YOUR PERSPECTIVE.
HOW SO?
FOR ONE THING, THERE ARE WAY MORE SWIMMING POOLS AND BASEBALL FIELDS THAN YOU THINK.
FASCINATING.

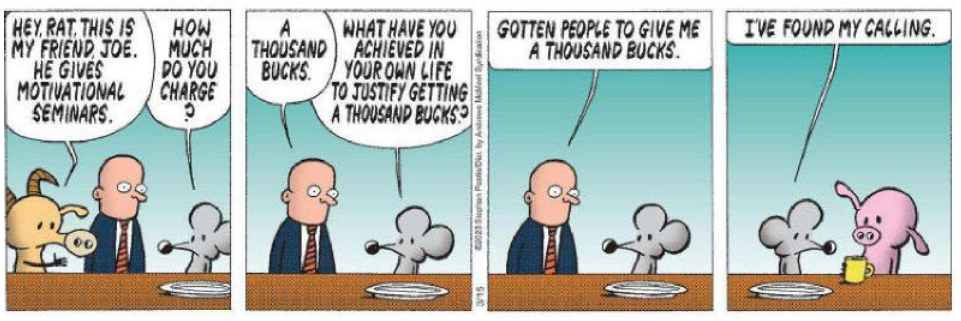
CANDORVILLE By Darrin Bell

CLYDE, GUESS WHAT LITTLE LIONEL SAID TO ME THIS MORNING?
NEVA SCURD
DID HE SAY, "HOW COME PARENTS FORCE EREBODY THEY KNOW TO LISTEN TO THE 'CUTE' STUFF THEY KIDS SAY"?
DID HE SAY, "WHY THEY GOTTA BOTHER EREBODY WITH THAT @$#%?"
I THOUGHT HIS DIALECT SUDDENLY SOUNDED SUSPICIOUSLY FAMILIAR.
THE TALK
TELL THAT BOY HIS UNCLE CLYDE SAY HE DONE GOOD.

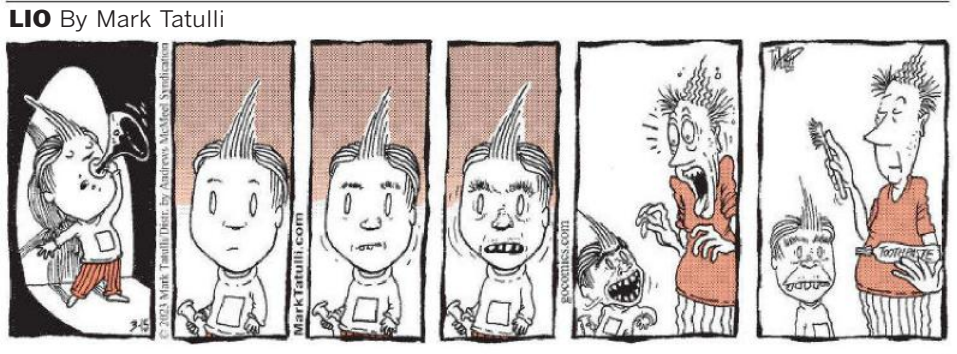
HALF FULL By Maria Scrivan



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis


HEY, RAT. THIS IS MY FRIEND JOE. HE GIVES MOTIVATIONAL SEMINARS.
HOW MUCH DO YOU CHARGE?
A THOUSAND BUCKS.
WHAT HAVE YOU ACHIEVED IN YOUR OWN LIFE TO JUSTIFY GETTING A THOUSAND BUCKS?
GOTTEN PEOPLE TO GIVE ME A THOUSAND BUCKS.
I'VE FOUND MY CALLING.

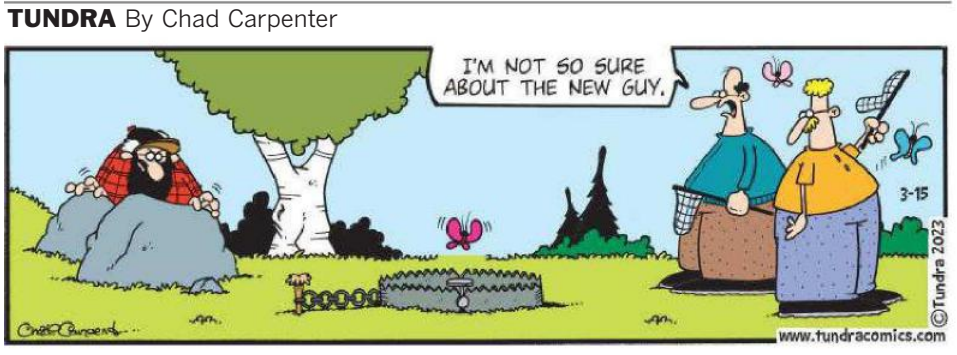
LIO By Mark Tatulli



ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

JEREMY, HAVING A CREDIT CARD IS A BIG RESPONSIBILITY.
I KNOW.
YOU CAN'T GO AROUND BUYING STUFF JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE ONE!
I GUARANTEE THAT WON'T HAPPEN.
AND WHY IS THAT?
I LOST IT TODAY.

TUNDRA By Chad Carpenter



SIX CHIX By Susan Camilleri Konar

FRAZZ By Jef Mallett

THIS IS JUST UNBELIEVABLE.
SO MANY SIZES AND SHAPES. SUCH INCONSISTENCY!
THE QUALITY CONTROL ON BABY-CUT CARROTS IS APPALLING!
I'M SORRY. YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR ME COMPLAIN.
BUT I DO WANT TO LISTEN TO A 9-YEAR-OLD CARE ABOUT VEGETABLES.

NON SEQUITUR By Wiley

HEH HEH
GIGGLE
SO I DISCOVAHED SOME ENCOUNTAHS AH JUST ALIEN TEENAGEAHS OUT JOY RIDIN'
AH, YES... I FIGURED THAT OUT.
...WHEN THE ALIENS STARTED SNIGGERING AFTER ADVISING ME TO INVEST ALL I HAVE IN CRYPTOCURRENCY
UH... WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
A "RÉSUMÉ EMBELLISHMENT" THRON-DOWN. IT'S THE NEW GREAT AMERICAN PASTIME
UHH
WELL SAID
WILEY
GOCOMICS.COM

PICKLES By Brian Crane

HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY, EARL?
EARL IS JUST FINE. IN FACT, EARL IS BETTER THAN FINE. EARL IS FINE AND DANDY.
YOU'RE REFERRING TO YOURSELF IN THE THIRD PERSON NOW?
3/15
YES, HE IS.

BABY BLUES By Jerry Scott & Rick Kirkman

HAMMIE, WE DID NOT BUY YOU ON eBAY OR AMAZON, AND I HAVE PROOF.
LOOK. HERE'S A PHOTO OF ME HOLDING YOU IN THE HOSPITAL MINUTES AFTER YOU WERE BORN.
SHE TOTALLY COULD HAVE PHOTOSHOPPED THAT.
ZOE!

CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers

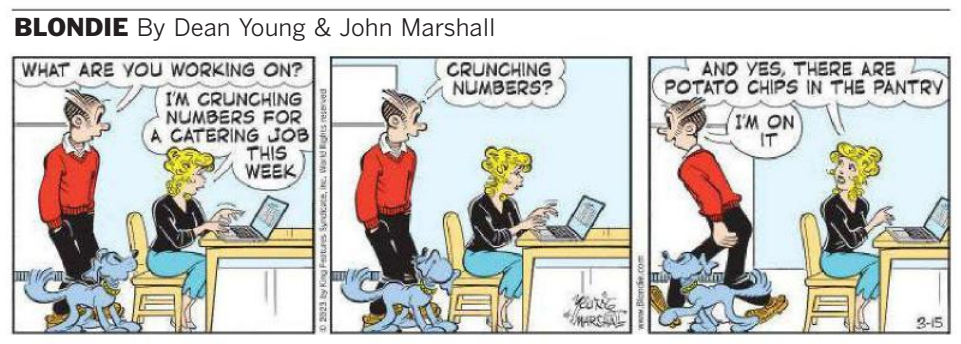
JUMP START By Robb Armstrong

SO, I HEARD CLAYTON AND MAUREEN KICKED YOU AND MARCY'S YOU-KNOW-WHAT IN PICKLEBALL!
THOSE TWO ARE STILL GLOATING ABOUT THAT?!
LET'S BE HONEST. IS PICKLEBALL EVEN A REAL SPORT?!
MUST BE. THERE'S INTEREST IN THE STORY AT ESPN!

MACANUDO By Liniers

WHO MAKES UP WORDS? THEY'RE A BUNCH OF SADISTS.
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
GUESS WHAT A PATHOLOGICAL FEAR OF LONG WORDS IS CALLED?
WHAT?
HIPPOPOTOMONSTROSESQUIPEDALIOPHOBIA.
THOSE MONSTERS.

BLONDIE By Dean Young & John Marshall


WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON?
I'M CRUNCHING NUMBERS FOR A CATERING JOB THIS WEEK
CRUNCHING NUMBERS?
AND YES, THERE ARE POTATO CHIPS IN THE PANTRY
I'M ON IT
3-15

BETWEEN FRIENDS By Sandra Bell-Lundy

BIZARRO By Wayno and Piraro

DRABBLE By Kevin Fagan

THIS COUCH IS UNCOMFORTABLE!
I LIKE IT HERE!
GET UP AND DO SOME EXERCISES!
LEAVE ME ALONE!
I HATE IT WHEN MY NAGGING BACK PAIN ARGUES WITH MY STUBBORN BELLY FAT!
YOU'RE THE REASON I HURT!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SLOUCHES!

MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell

PEANUTS By Charles M. Schulz

‘Last of Us’ finale? It’s complicated

[**‘Last of Us,’** from E1]
Times staff writer Tracy Brown and video game critic Todd Martens discuss the reactions to the episode, how it compares to the game and more.

LIANE HENTSCHER HBO

JOEL (Pedro Pascal) comforts Ellie (Bella Ramsey) at a medical facility in season finale of “The Last of Us.”

‘The Last of Us’

Streaming: HBO Max, anytime
Rating: TV-MA (may be unsuitable for children under age 17)

Tracy Brown: Despite Hollywood’s inconsistent track record with video game adaptations, “The Last of Us” was a series I’d been looking forward to for quite a while. As someone who doesn’t usually play games that require shooting things and avoids most horror, a TV show felt like the perfect way for me to finally experience a story I’d heard so much about. But then I ended up feeling like I should play the game first anyway.

All that is to say, I knew what to expect with the season finale. I’d known even before I started playing “The Last of Us Part 1” how the game ended and that the ending was divisive. But what I did not expect was how different the experience was as a TV show compared to the game. So I’m curious, Todd, as someone who also experienced “The Last of Us” through the video game first, what you thought of the finale?

Todd Martens: The ending of “The Last of Us” has been divisive since its release in 2013. It’s made for debate, as it raises multiple moral questions. There’s the question of sacrifice — should one person give their life if it means possibly saving humanity? And then there’s the personal questions, as Joel, in an effort to protect Ellie, proceeds to lie to her about the surgery. His inability to be truthful to Ellie, to let her know what actions he took to save her life, always felt uncomfortable, even in the game.

But I think the ending is an example of the power of interactive entertainment. For much of the game, we are playing as Joel and seeing the world from his perspective. We may not always agree with Joel’s actions, but we have the illusion of control over them, and as we propel Joel through the narrative, we develop a sense of empathy and a level of attachment to him. We see, for instance, how his relationship with Ellie is reawakening his faith in humanity. Joel had never healed from the trauma of losing his daughter, and Ellie shows him it’s possible to become close to others again.

This creates a protective feeling for the player. We care for Ellie. We want to safeguard her. And I think that was why, in my initial review of the game in 2013, I wrote that it felt hopeful, despite the harshness of the world. In a sense, its message was one of yearning, of so desperately wanting to be able to connect with another human. With that emotional backdrop, I felt, in the game, that one should protect Ellie above all costs.

What surprised me is how different I would feel watching it unfold as a television episode. I think Lorraine Ali, one of the Times’ television critics, pretty succinctly summarized it in her review:

“As Joel said to Ellie before they entered the hospital where a team secretly planned to dissect her: ‘Maybe there’s nothing bad out there, but so far, there’s always been something bad out there ... We don’t have to do this. I want you to know that.’ She answers, ‘After everything I’ve done. It can’t be for nothing.’ Oh, but it will be, Ellie.”

For the last eight episodes, “The Last of Us” showed us the cruelty of its world. We saw how humanity was ravaged and optimism felt like an endangered emotion. We didn’t just see Joel’s perspective. We saw a broader, wide-angle lens, and — while I don’t think this means the ending is good or bad, per se — I think that made Joel’s decision to protect Ellie, rather than attempt to save the world, more difficult to grapple with.

You’ve been playing the game more recently, and you said you felt the ending hit differently on the series. How so?

Brown: Like you mentioned, I found that after hours and hours of essentially living in Joel’s shoes in the game, it was much easier to understand his decision to save Ellie over potentially saving the rest of the world. Even him lying to Ellie about what happened when she asks Joel to swear that he is telling the truth is uncomfortable to see, but you sort of accept it and hope they can find some happiness together after.

But watching Joel in the episode is much harder to stomach.

The show has been less subtle in its lead up to the finale about making a point on the complicated depths of love. Episode 3, with Bill and Frank’s story, introduces this idea of there being just one person worth saving in the world because you love them. Kathleen, the rebel leader in Kansas City, was willing to risk the entire city to avenge her brother. You see Ellie’s mom, Anna, in the early moments of the finale lying to Marlene about the timing of her infection because she chooses Ellie’s life over everybody else’s safety. All are moments that don’t exist in the game, but they foreshadow Joel’s ultimate decision.

In the show, it’s far easier to see Joel’s actions as horrific because it feels much more abrupt. You’ve always been aware you’re not Joel, so the lack of empathy twists the meaning of the ending a little. Now, Ellie’s desperation to believe Joel — even though you can tell she knows he’s not telling her the truth — is that much more heartbreaking, and their relationship is something messy to root for. The future just seems bleak.

It’s also been interesting to see how the response to the finale has been divisive among those who’ve just followed the TV series. You’ve mentioned Lorraine’s review, but we also know colleagues who loved the finale. The recaps and reviews from different outlets are also split.

Martens: It’s interesting to me how personal the ending can feel. As a childless single person, I think that informs my perspective. It’s maybe a bit easier for me to say, “The right thing to do is to try and save humanity.” But I remember when I spoke to Neil Druckmann, the writer of the game and the co-creator of the series, he was very adamant that he felt Joel was making the right choice. He made it clear that he would have made the same decision.

“To me, he did the right thing for him. As a parent, if I found myself in that same situation, I would hope I could do what Joel did.”

Druckmann did add, however, that he likely would have spared Marlene, the Firefly leader who swore to raise and protect Ellie. “That’s the part where I think Joel is different from me,” Druckmann said. “But everything else, I would hope I would do the same to save my kid.”

I also felt the show made it more clear what Ellie would want. In the game, as someone controlling Joel, you sort of make his perspective your own. But I felt the show worked harder to show us Ellie’s view of the situation, and it seemed to imply that she was willing to sacrifice herself because she had experienced so much loss and heartbreak and hoped to spare others from those feelings.

There’s no guarantee, of course, that the surgery and vaccine would work. I remember feeling that in the game, “We must save Ellie because there’s no assurance this will work.” In interactive entertainment, we feel very much like puppeteers, like we are in dialogue with the character we are controlling. We see the world through their eyes, and their emotions become our own. I think the ending, which was already divisive, becomes more so on television because we’re a step removed.

Brown: In the game, “the right choice for Joel” becomes “the right choice” because that’s how you win. But on a TV show, you don’t have to worry about winning.